




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**MARVEL®**

# VISIONARIES

Knights of the Magical Light



**STAR!**  
THE NEW  
WORLD IN THE  
MARVEL  
UNIVERSE!

# THE BALANCE OF POWER

ONLY A FEW SHORT MOMENTS AGO THESE WARRIOR OF THE PLANET PRYSMOS STOOD WITHIN IRON MOUNTAIN MYSTIC FORTRESS OF THE WIZARD KNOWN AS MERKLYN, WHOSE SORCERY IMBUED EACH OF THEM WITH AS-YET-UNKNOWN MAGICAL POWERS...

THEN, WITH A WORD FROM MERKLYNN, THEY WERE INSTANTLY AND MYSTICALLY TRANSPORTED TO THE SHATTERED LAND AT THE MOUNTAIN'S BASE, WHERE THEY HEAR A PROPHECY FILLED BOTH WITH MENACE AND HOPE...

ONE FINAL WORD, BRAVE KNIGHTS! WITH THE POWERS YOU NOW POSSESS, YOU CAN EITHER REBUILD THIS WONDROUS WORLD--

--OR DESTROY IT ALL! THE FATE OF PRYSMOS IS IN YOUR HANDS!

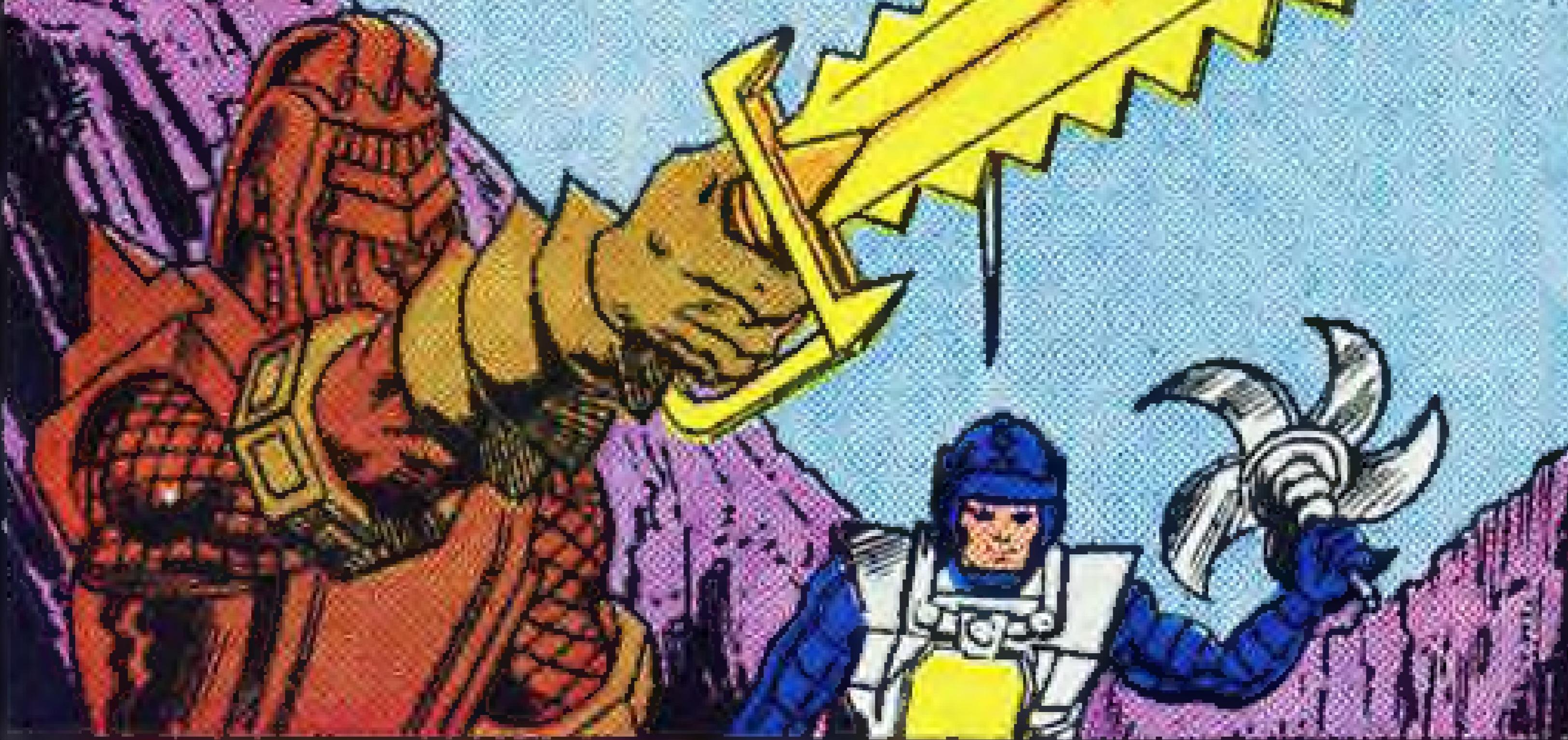
JIM SALICRUP • PLOT  
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ROMEO TANGHAL • INKS  
JANICE CHIANG • LETTERS  
JULIANNA FERRITER • COLORS  
BOB BUDIANSKY • EDITOR  
TOM DEFALCO • EDITOR IN CHIEF

HOLD IT,  
MERKLYN! YOU'VE  
GIVEN POWERS TO  
THE KNIGHTS AND  
LORDS WITH STAFFS--  
WHAT ABOUT THOSE  
OF US WITHOUT  
STAFFS?

I HATE  
TO AGREE WITH  
REEKON, BUT HE'S  
RIGHT. WHAT  
POWERS WILL WE  
HAVE?

YOU WILL  
DISCOVER YOUR  
POWERS SOON  
ENOUGH, ALL  
OF YOU.

ONLY YOU  
CAN DECIDE  
WHETHER TO USE  
THOSE POWERS  
FOR GOOD  
OR ILL.



WITH A WILD CRY, THE TWO GROUPS OF KNIGHTLY WARRIOR'S ATTACK, THROWING THEMSELVES MAN AGAINST MAN, IN A COMBAT MADE ALL THE MORE FEROCIOUS BY ITS SHEER SENSELESSNESS.

SUCH IS THE MADNESS THAT HAS CONSUMED THE ONCE-PEACEFUL PLANET OF PRYSMOS IN THE DAYS SINCE THE AGE OF SCIENCE ENDED, AND THE AGE OF MAGIC RETURNED...

LIKE THE TECHNOLOGY THAT NOW LIES IN SCATTERED RUINS ABOUT THIS WORLD, THE ANCIENT WAYS OF LAW AND PEACE HAVE COLLAPSED AS WELL.

IN THIS SAVAGE NEW WORLD, IN THIS AGE OF MAGIC, THE RULES ARE SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST AND MIGHT MAKES RIGHT.

WATCHING THIS SCENE, THE KNIGHT KNOWN AS LEORIC FEELS BITTERNESS WELLING IN HIS HEART.

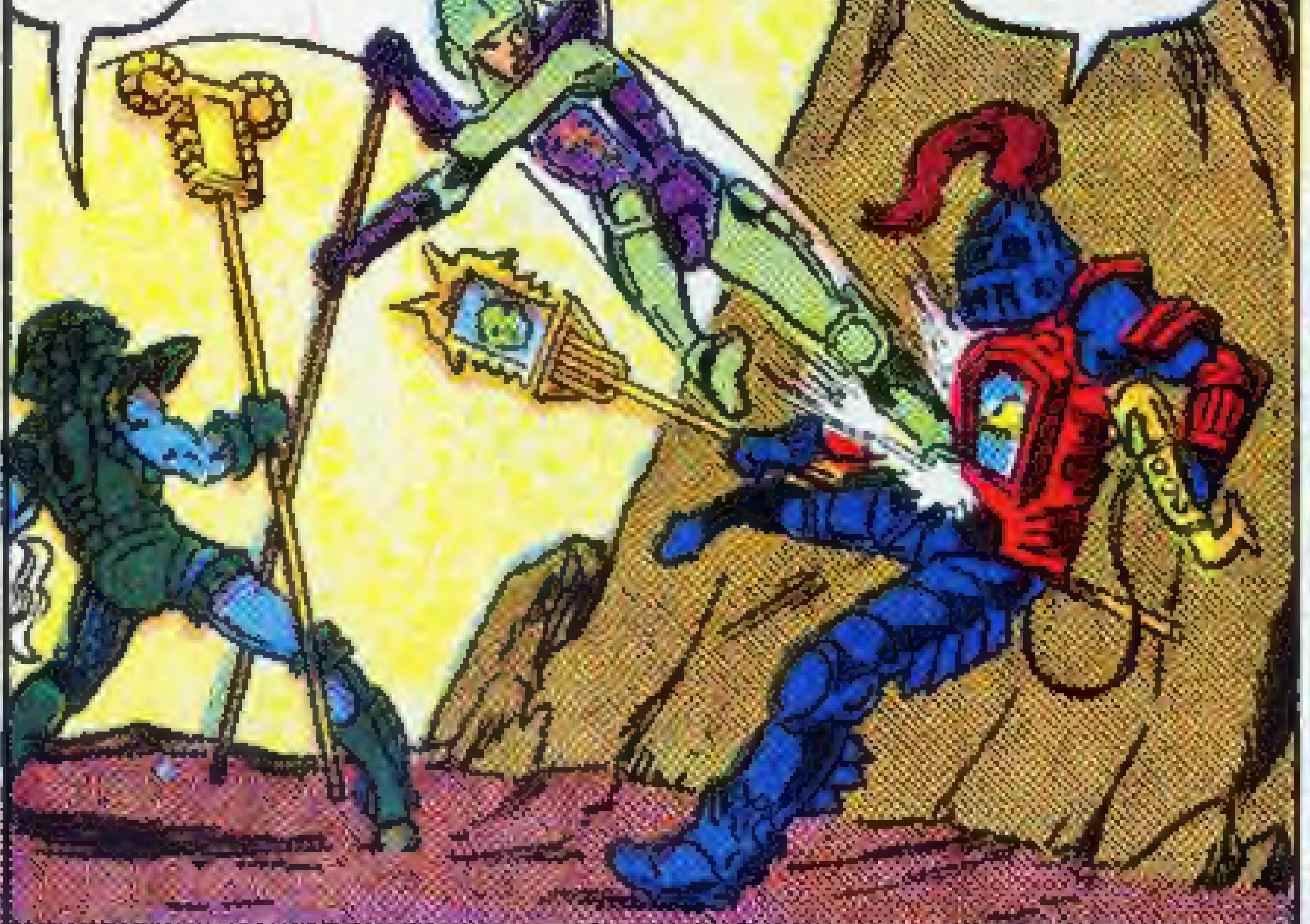
WHAT GLORY THERE MIGHT HAVE BEEN, COULD THESE KNIGHTS BUT WORK TOGETHER FOR A COMMON CAUSE...

HA! YOU  
MISSSED ME,  
GALADRIA!

TYPICAL MALE EGO! I  
WASN'T AIMING FOR  
YOU, DARKSTORM!

EH?

OOOF!



I'D RATHER FIGHT  
VIRULINA, BUT SINCE  
SHE ISN'T NEARBY, I'LL  
TAKE WHAT FOE I CAN  
GET-- SUCH AS THIS  
COWARD!

WELL, LEXOR?  
WILL YOU FIGHT  
OR RUN AWAY?

UHHH!  
L-LEAVE ME  
ALONE--!

CRASH!

NOT TILL YOU  
SURRENDER!



"NO WORDS  
ENTERING MY MIND--  
LIKE A VOICE  
WHISPERING IN  
MY EAR!

"THE ARROWS  
TURN, THE  
SWORDS  
REBEL--

"--MAY NOTHING  
PIERCE THIS  
MORTAL  
SHELL!"

HA! I FEEL  
POWER  
SURGING  
THROUGH  
ME! NOTHING  
CAN HARM ME  
NOW! I'M  
INVULNERABLE!

WHA--?

MY STAFF  
SNAPPED!

IT'S THE  
POWER  
MERLYN  
GAVE ME!  
YOU CAN'T  
HURT ME,  
WOMAN!

BUT I--  
I CAN  
HURT  
YOU!

GALADRIA'S IN  
TROUBLE!



BETTER MOVE  
FAST BEFORE  
SHE GETS--

**TUONG!**

HUM? I  
BOUNCED!

OWW! KICKING  
HIM IS LIKE  
HITTING A  
STONE WALL!

NOW IT'S MY  
TURN TO TRY  
TO SMASH YOU,  
WITTERQUICK--  
HEY! SLOW  
DOWN!

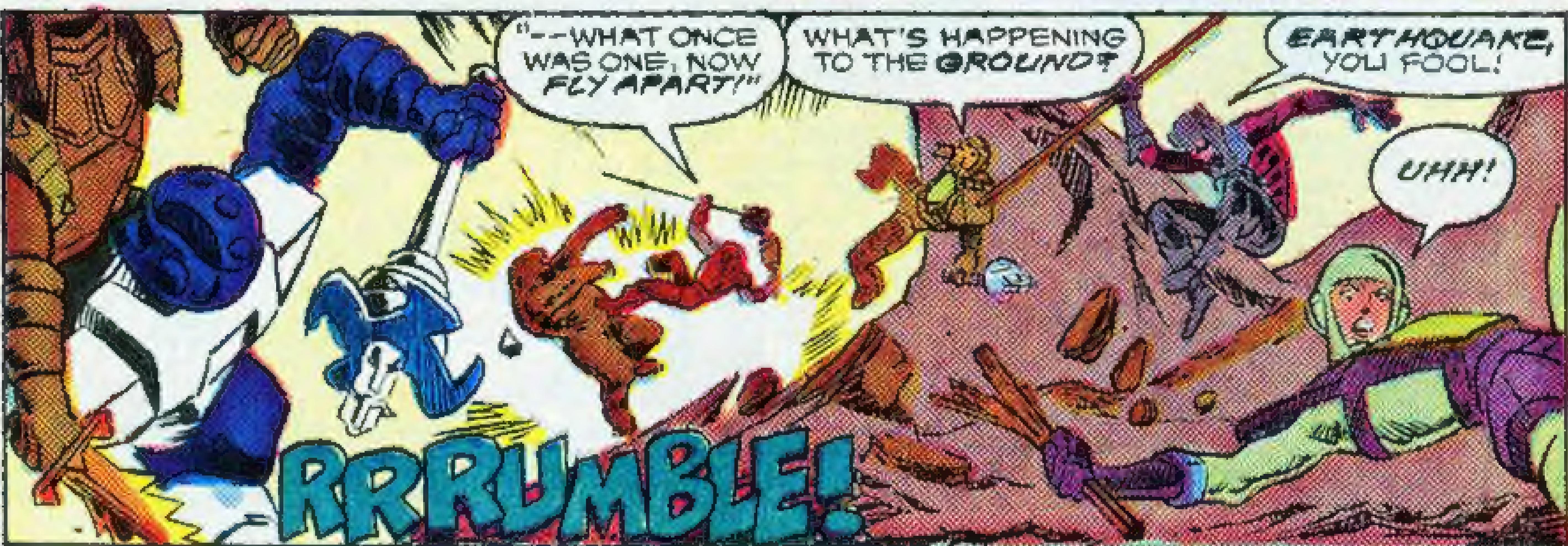
SOME KIND  
OF SPELL-  
POEM IN MY  
THOUGHTS...

"SHEATHE  
THESE FEET  
IN THE  
DRIVING  
GALE--

"MAKE  
SWIFT  
THESE  
LEGS, O'ER  
LAND I  
SAIL!"

I NEVER SAW  
ANYONE MOVE  
SO FAST!





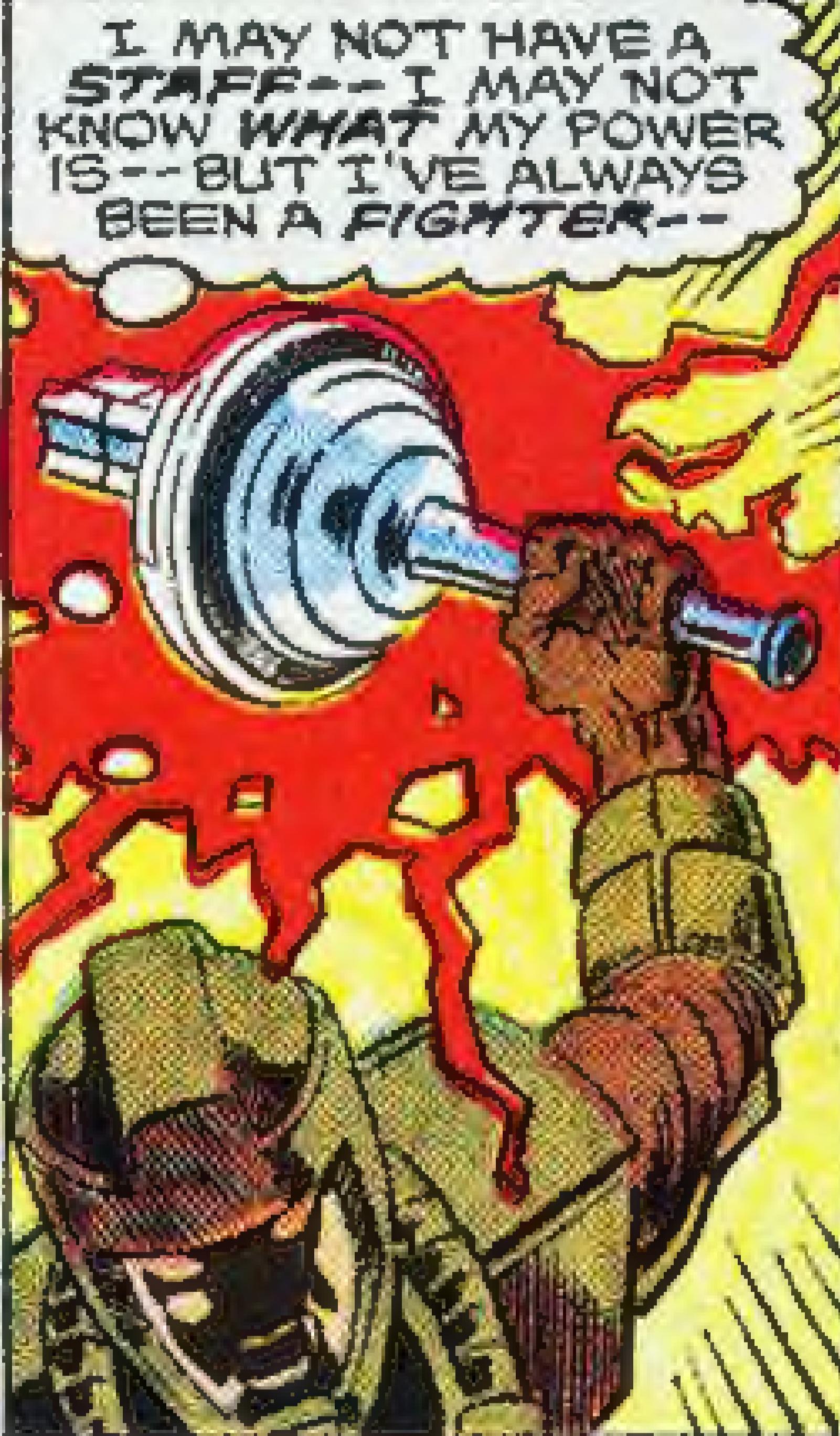
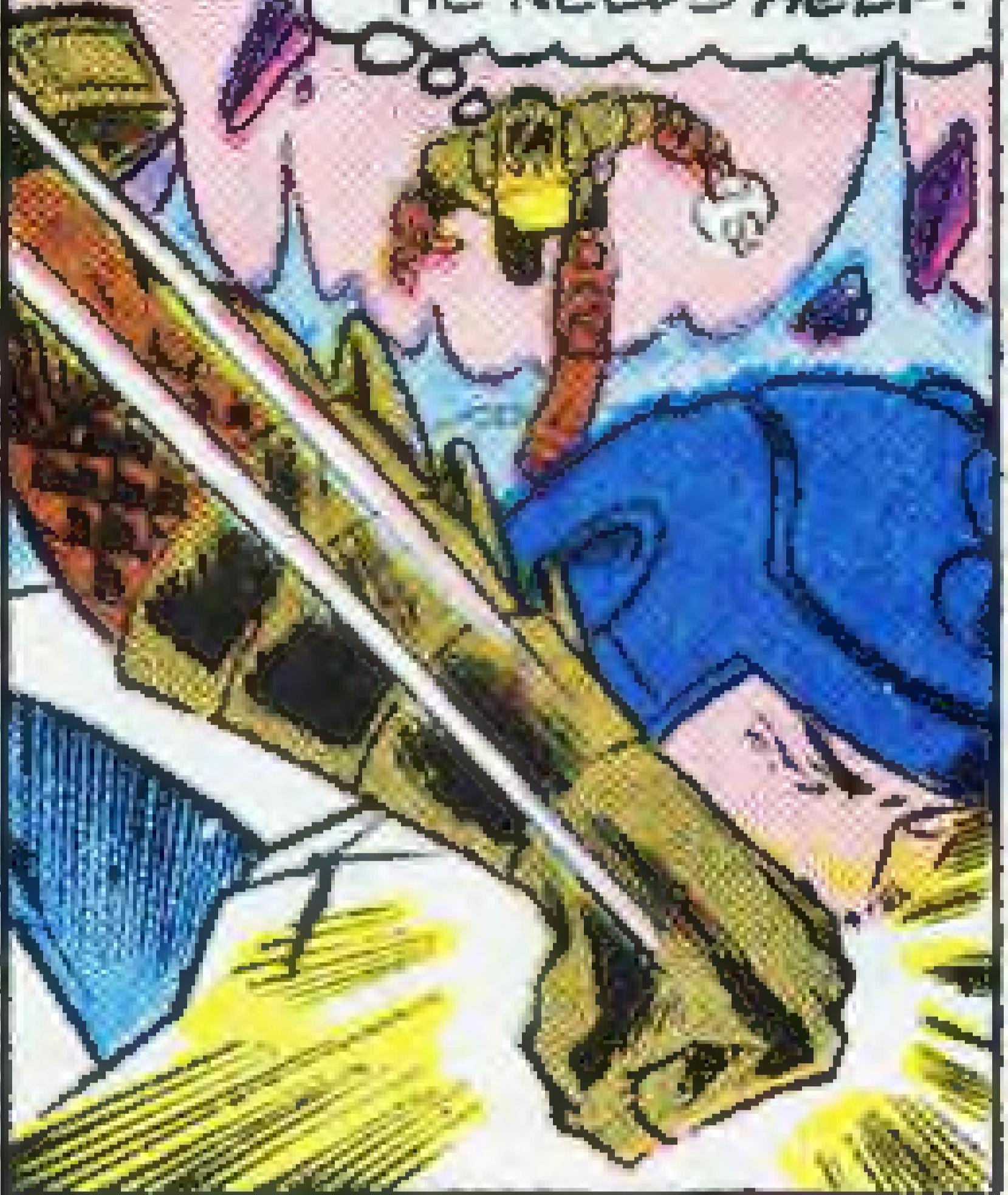
MAKING THE EARTH MOVE MUST BE CINDARR'S POWER!

UH-OH! I THOUGHT I SMELLED TROUBLE! REEKON CAUGHT ECTAR OFF GUARD DURING THE SHAKEUP! HE NEEDS HELP!

I MAY NOT HAVE A STAFF-- I MAY NOT KNOW WHAT MY POWER IS-- BUT I'VE ALWAYS BEEN A FIGHTER--

--AND I'M NOT ABOUT TO STOP FIGHTING NOW!

**WHAM!**



YOU ALL RIGHT, OLD-TIMER?

I MAY HAVE A FEW YEARS ON YOU, FERYL, BUT I'M NOT OLD-- JUST EXPERIENCED.

I'D LIKE TO SHARE SOME OF THAT EXPERIENCE WITH REEKON HERE...

ANY TIME YOU'RE READY, ECTAR!

STOP YOUR FIGHTING, ALL OF YOU!

ARE YOU WARRIOR OR MADMEN? THINK OF THE POWER WE NOW POSSESS-- AND LOOK HOW YOU'RE USING IT!



WHEN THE AGE OF SCIENCE ENDED,  
THE WORLD AS WE KNEW IT ENDED AS  
WELL. NOW WE LIVE IN AN AGE OF  
MAGIC, A TIME OF WONDER... THE  
DAWN OF A NEW BEGINNING.

WITH OUR POWERS, AS WE  
COME TO UNDERSTAND THEM,  
WE CAN BRING HOPE TO THE  
HOPELESS. WE CAN RESTORE  
JUSTICE TO THE LAND.

BUT  
FIRST WE  
MUST STOP  
FIGHTING  
AMONG OUR-  
SELVES.

I  
AGREE.

DARKSTORM...?  
LET'S SAVE OUR  
STRENGTH FOR THE  
COMING STRUGGLE  
AND LEARN WHAT  
POWERS WE EACH  
POSSESS.

LET LEORIC  
PLAN PEACE  
IF IT MAKES  
HIM HAPPY.

I WILL PLAN  
FOR WAR.  
REEKON,  
MORTDRED, CINDARR,  
CRAVEX AND LEXOR--  
YOU'VE ALL SWEORN  
ALLEGIANCE TO MY  
STAFF. WHO ELSE  
WILL JOIN THE  
DARKLING  
LORDS?

I'LL STAND WITH  
YOU, DARKSTORM. I'VE  
NO PATIENCE FOR  
WEAKNESS, AND  
LEORIC'S MEWLING  
PLEAS FOR PEACE  
MAKE MY STOMACH  
TURN.

I DON'T KNOW  
WHAT POWER I  
POSSESS, BUT WHEN  
I DO... I WANT TO  
USE IT TO CRUSH,  
NOT CREATE.

GLAD TO  
HAVE YOU,  
VIRULINA.  
ANY  
OTHERS?

NO?  
VERY WELL, THEN.  
WHEN NEXT WE MEET,  
MAY IT BE ON THE  
FIELD OF BATTLE!

A VIOLENT,  
ANGRY MAN,  
THAT ONE.

HE'LL MAKE  
A MOST  
DANGEROUS  
ENEMY.



NOT LONG AFTER, AT LEORIC'S STRONGHOLD IN THE CITY OF NEW VALARAK, AMID THE RUINS OF A ONCE-MIGHTY TECHNOLOGY...

IT'S SO FRUSTRATING -- KNOWING YOU HAVE A POWER BUT NOT KNOWING WHAT IT IS. WITHOUT A STAFF, I FEEL ALMOST-- **HELPLESS**.

I UNDERSTAND YOUR FEELINGS, GALADRIA...

AND UNTIL WE COMPREHEND THE FULL NATURE OF THE MAGICAL POWERS MERKLYN GAVE US, I SUGGEST WE STAY HERE IN NEW VALARAK, TO STUDY AND TRAIN TOGETHER.

IN TIME, THOSE OF YOU WITHOUT STAFFS-- GALADRIA, FERYL AND ECTAR-- WILL UNDOUBTEDLY HAVE YOUR MAGIC GIFTS REVEALED.

TIME IS SOMETHING WE HAVE IN SHORT SUPPLY, LEORIC.

WITTERQUICK'S RIGHT. WHY WAIT FOR DARKSTORM TO STRIKE?

I SAY WE SHOULD ATTACK FIRST, WITH OR WITHOUT POWERS.

BOY FERYL'S GOT A POINT. BEST DEFENSE IS A GOOD OFFENSE.

MAGIC OR NO MAGIC, I WANT TO FACE REEKON AGAIN... ONE ON ONE.

DON'T GET CARRIED AWAY BY YOUR ANGER, ECTAR.

REMEMBER WHAT MERKLYN SAID-- WE'RE SUPPOSED TO USE OUR MAGIC TO REBUILD THE WORLD, NOT FIGHT A WAR.

MAYBE WE'LL HAVE TO FIGHT THE WAR FIRST, ARZON.

WHAT-EVER HAPPENS, I AGREE WITH LEORIC--WE MUST STAND TOGETHER!

THEN LET US TAKE AN OATH-- TO STAND AS ONE, TO STRIVE AS ONE, UNTIL OUR DESTINED WORK IS DONE!

LET THOSE WHO AGREE SAY AYE!



ALMOST SIMULTANEOUSLY, IN THE DARK DOMAIN OF THE LORD KNOWN AS DARKSTORM...

I RESENT THE IMPLICATION THAT SOMEHOW THE THREE OF US ARE *LESS* THAN THE REST OF YOU-- JUST BECAUSE YOU HAVE STAFFS AND WE DON'T.

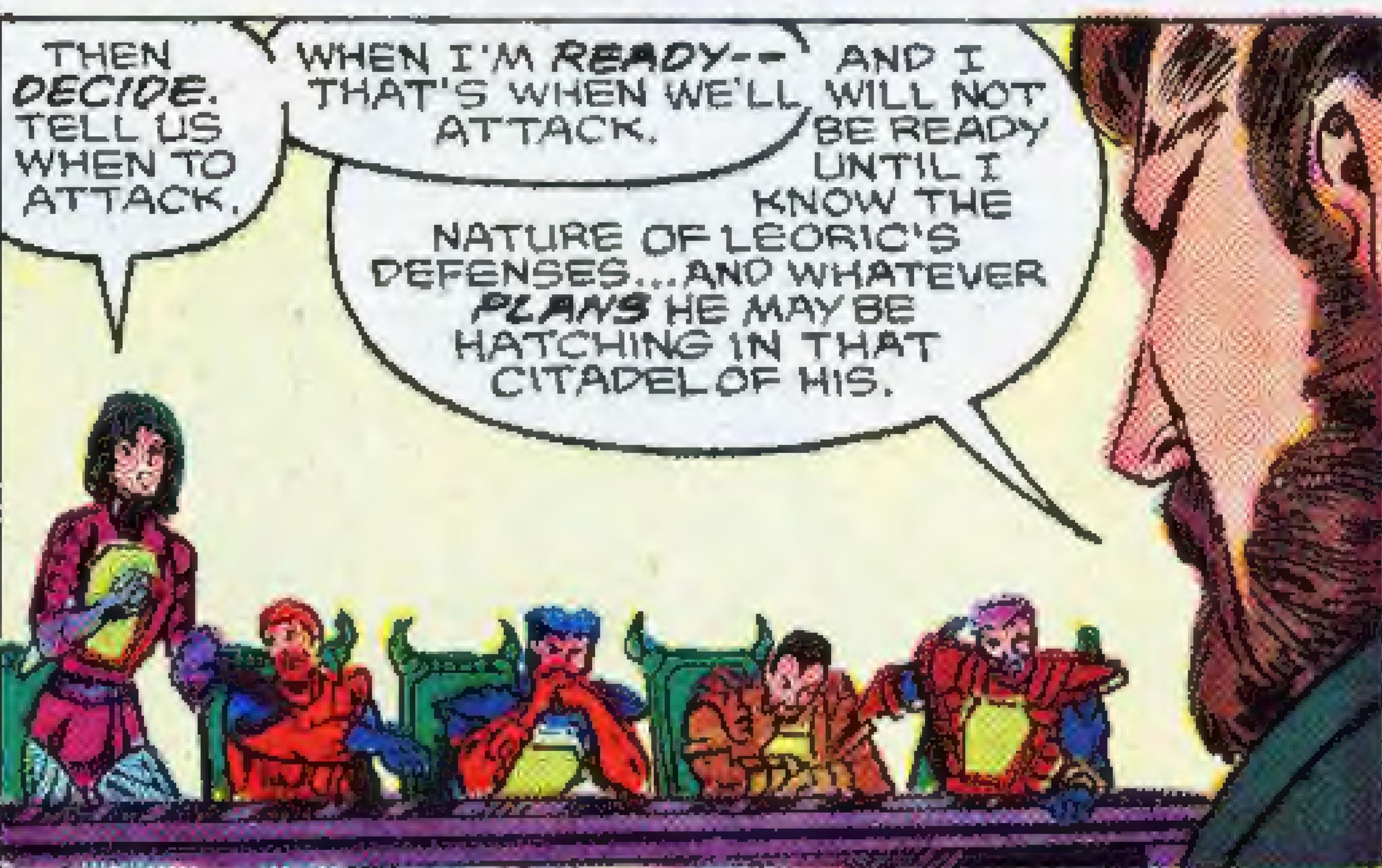
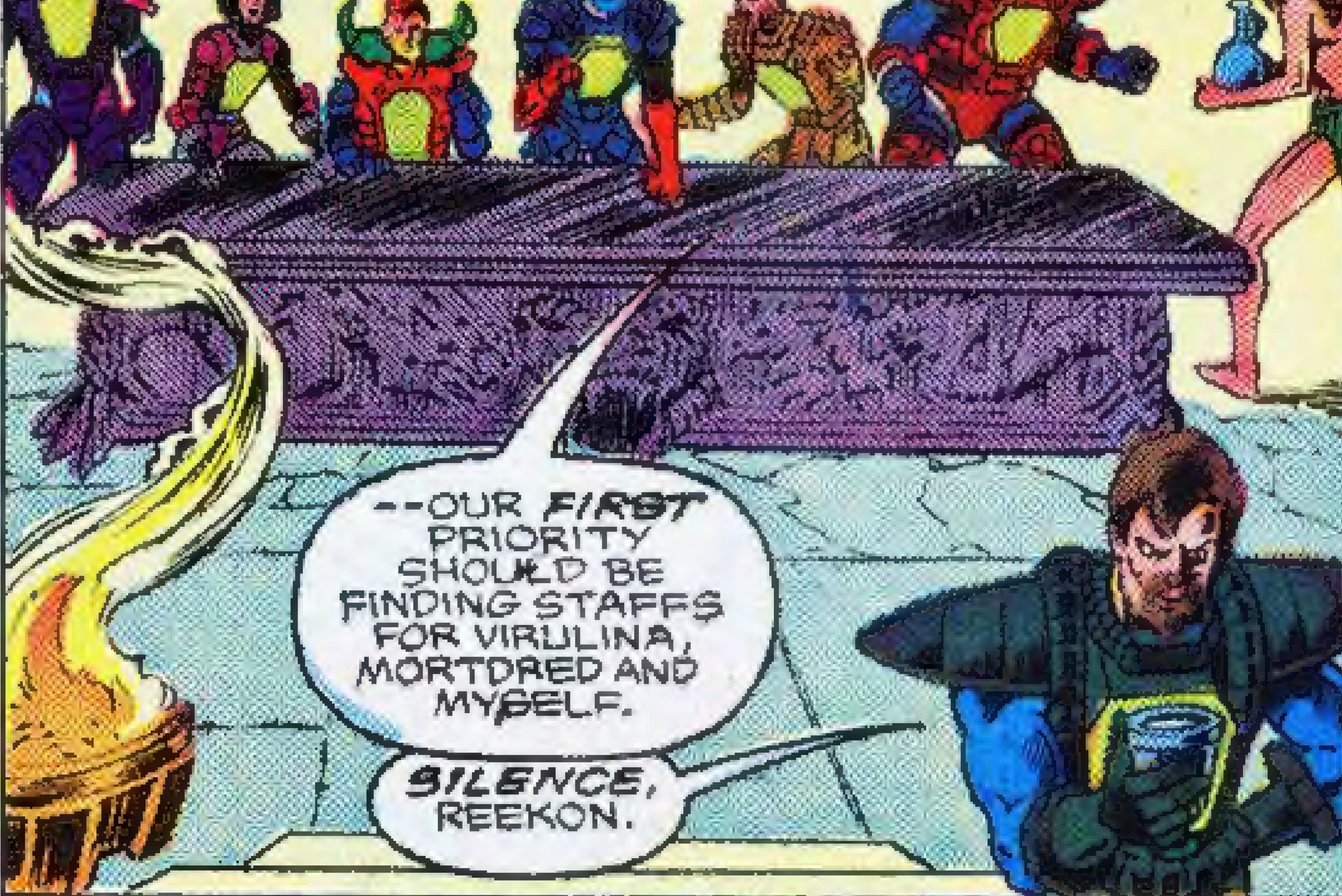
MORTDRED, MAY BE USELESS, BUT I'M A SPY OF THE FIRST ORDER WITH OR WITHOUT A STAFF!

EH? REEKON, HOW DARE YOU--

BE QUIET, MORTDRED, AND DON'T ARGUE. WE ALL KNOW YOU'RE A SPINELESS WORM.

REEKON SPEAKS FOR ME AS WELL. EVEN WITHOUT A STAFF, I'M MORE THAN A MATCH FOR ANY MAN!

THANK YOU, VIRULINA. NOW AS I WAS SAYING--



ONCE THIS WAS A FLOURISHING COMMUNITY, A HUB OF COMMERCE DURING THE DAYS OF HIGH TECHNOLOGY; NOW IT IS LITTLE MORE THAN A SLUM IN THE SHADOW OF DARKSTORM'S CASTLE, AND THE AIR IS THICK WITH DESPERATION.

BUT FOR REEKON AND MORTORED, WHO THRIVE ON THE DESPAIR OF OTHERS, THE AIR IS SWEETER THAN THE MOST PIQUANT PERFUME..

I TELL YOU, MORTORED, IT'S HUMILIATING.

JUST BECAUSE WE HAVE NO STAFFS, DARKSTORM SENDS US ON THE LOWEST OF MISSIONS-- TO GET HIS ARMOR CLEANED BY SOME THIRD-RATE BLACKSMITH.

I THINK IT'S A PRIVILEGE, REEKON.

WHAT?

ANY MISSION FOR MY LORD DARKSTORM IS AN HONOR OF THE HIGHEST ORDER, AND THIS MAN HARKON IS NO SIMPLE BLACKSMITH.

BEFORE THE AGE OF MAGIC BEGAN, HE WAS A BRILLIANT ENGINEER--A SCIENTIST.

SO WHAT?

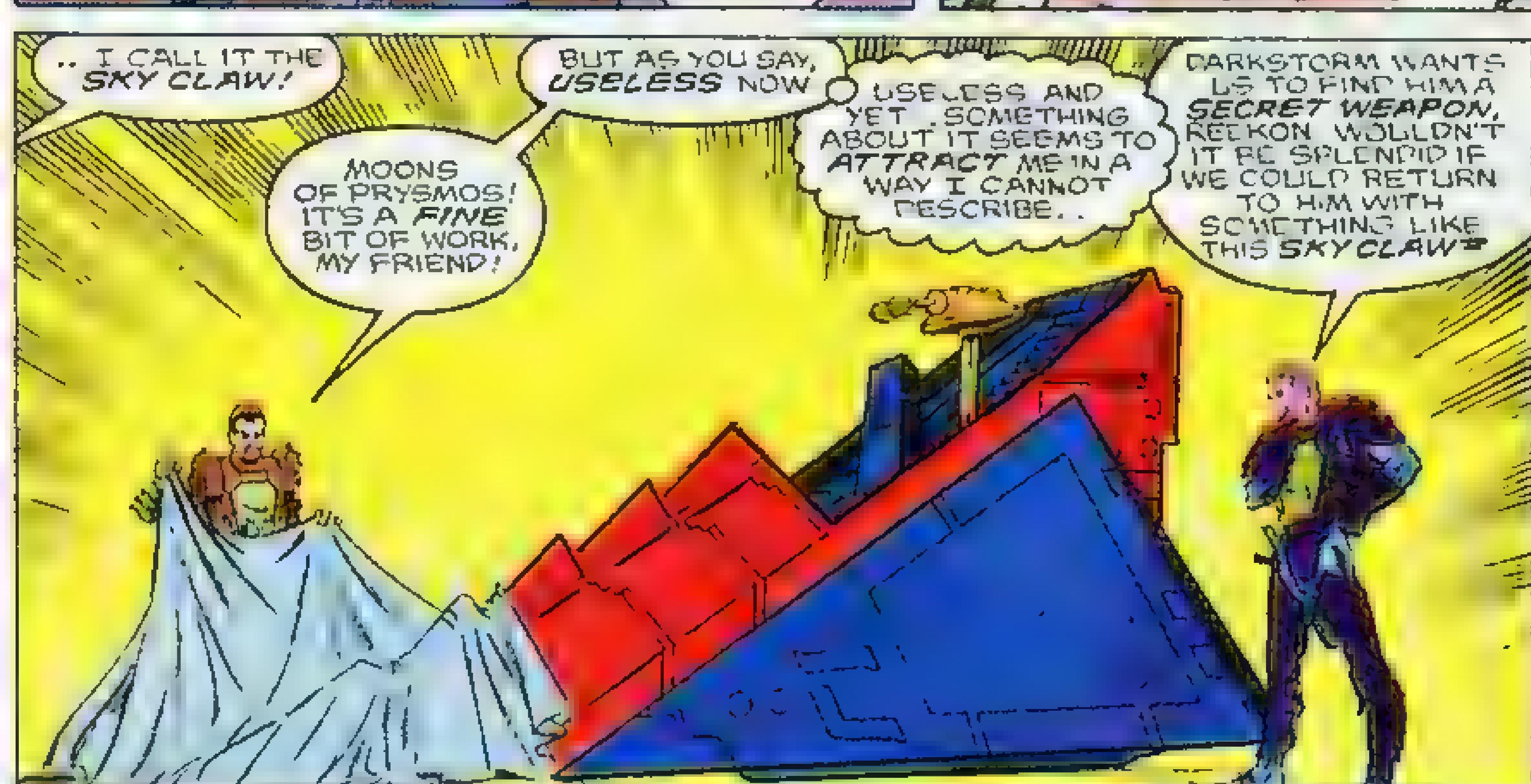
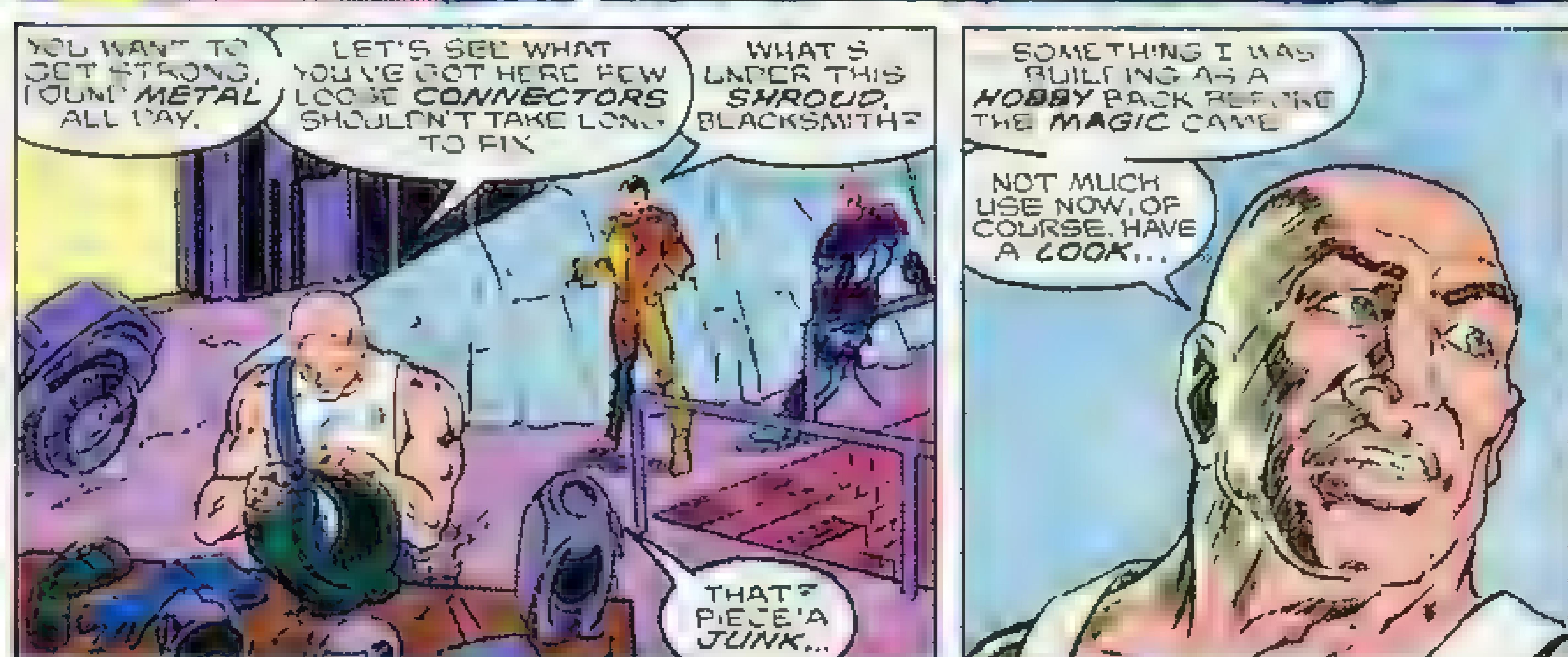
WHAT GOOD IS A SCIENTIST IN A WORLD OF MAGIC? ABOUT AS MUCH USE AS AN EXTRA NOSE.

IT'S A NEW AGE, MORTORED, AND THE OLD SKILLS DON'T MUCH MATTER ANY MORE. JUDGE A MAN BY HIS STRENGTH, NOT HIS BRAINS, THAT'S WHAT I SAY...

BRILLIANT OR NOT, HE'S JUST ANOTHER BLACKSMITH NOW.

EHH? WHAT 'IS THIS PLACE...?

HARKON'S BLACKSMITH SHOP, REEKON.



SPLENDID PERHAPS, BUT A FANTASY. SINCE MAGIC RETURNED TO THE WORLD, NOTHING ELECTRICAL WORKS

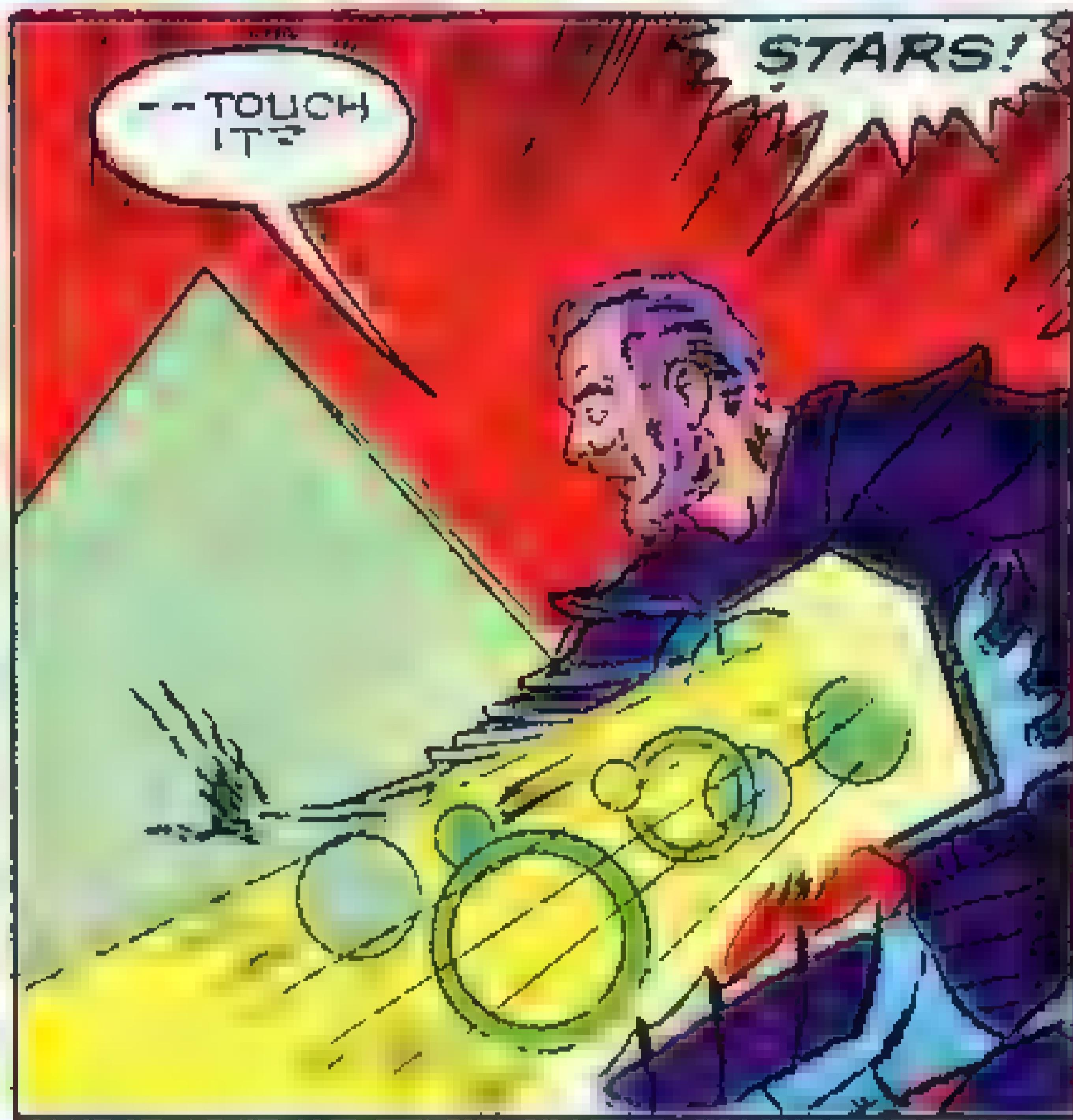
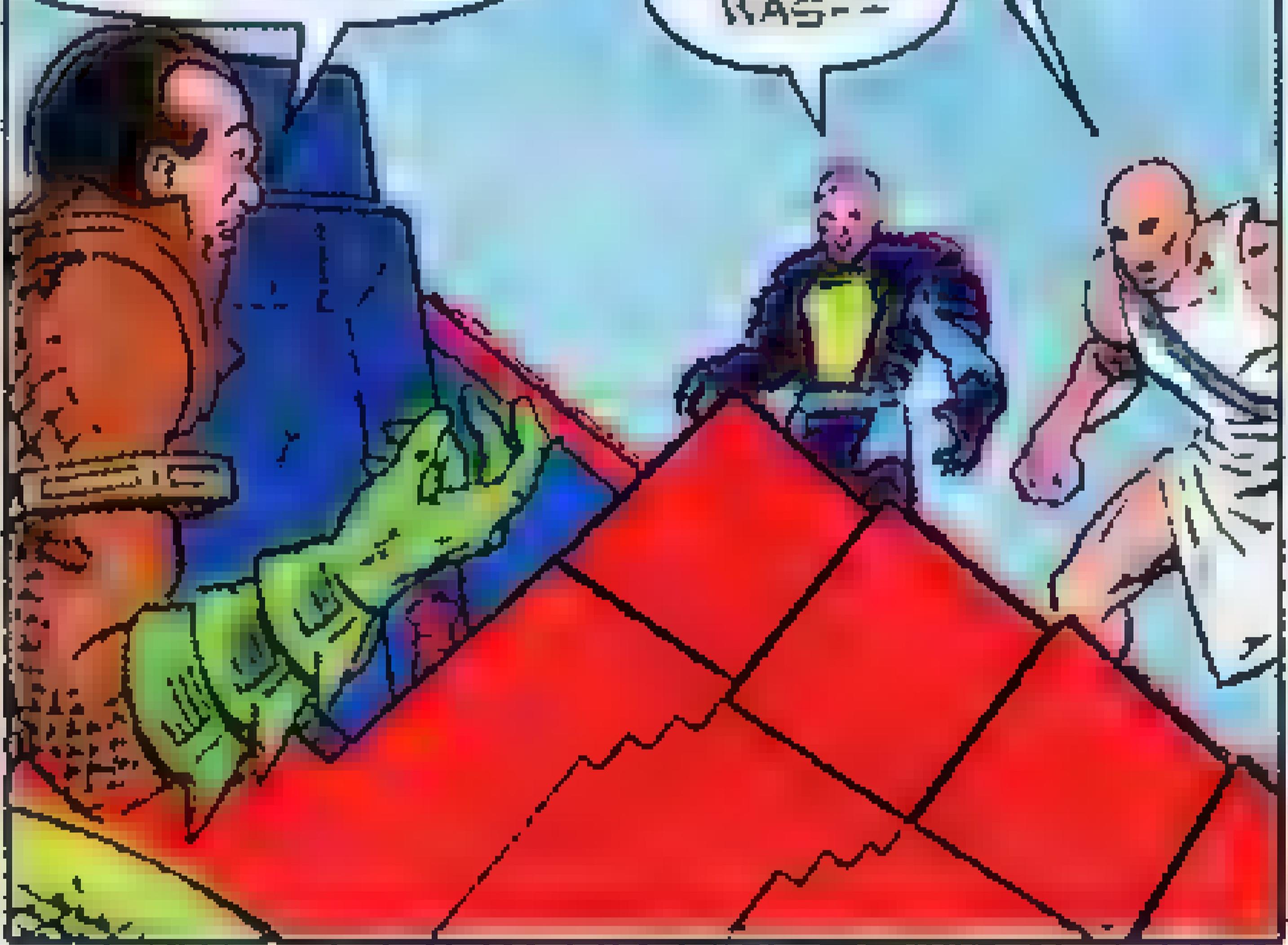
HARKON IS RIGHT. LOVELY AS THIS IS, IT'S NOTHING BUT A PIECE OF--



ALL I DID WAS TOUCH IT IT FELT AS IF MY HAND WERE ON FIRE SOME HOW, AND THE FIRE PASSED FROM ME INTO THE SHIP..

FANTASTIC! I HAVEN'T HEARD THE HUM OF SERVOS AND TURBINES IN YEARS!

AND ALL YOU DID WAS--



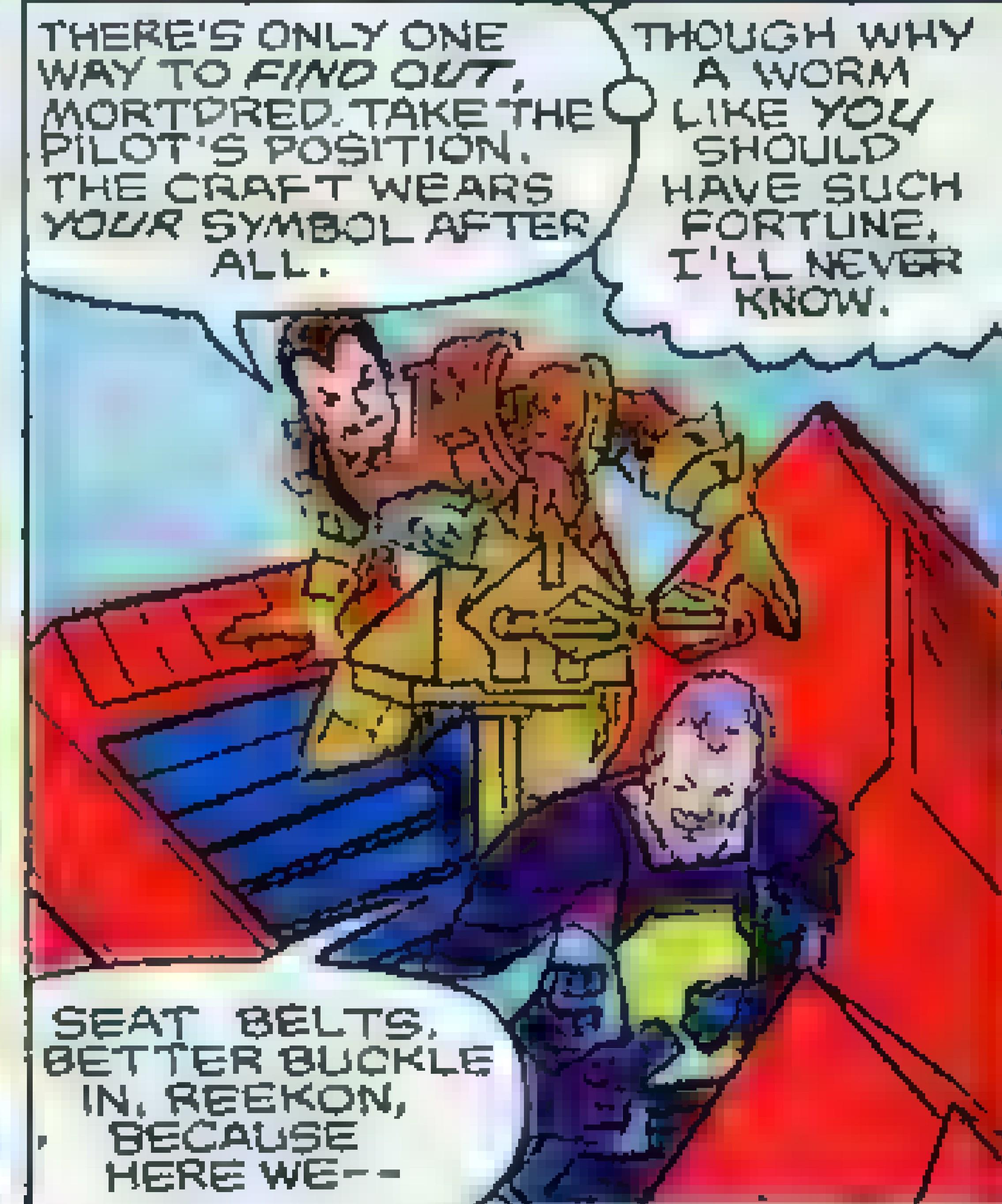
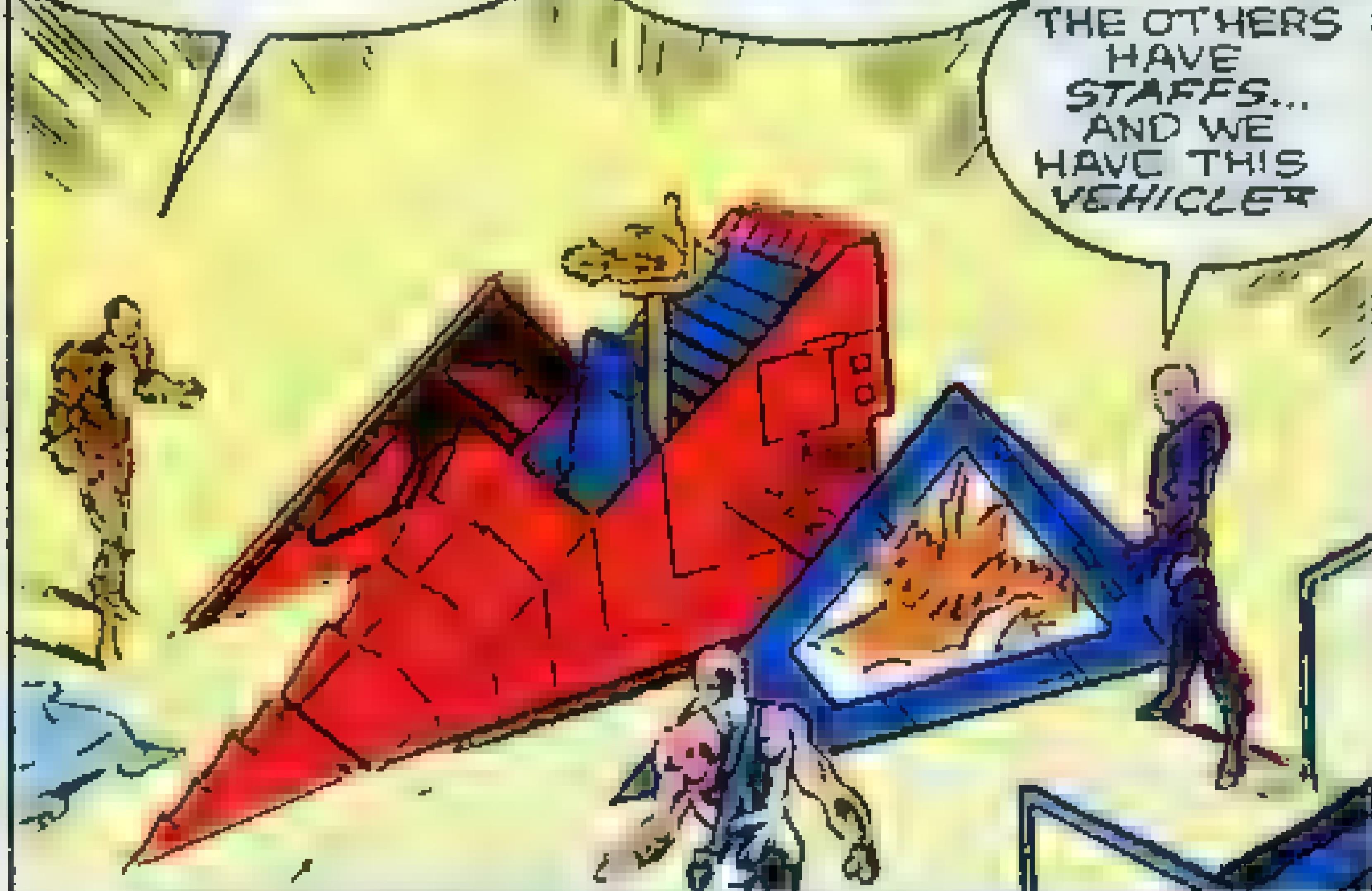
MORTORED, LOOK! THE SYMBOL FROM YOUR CHEST PLATE-- IT'S TRANSFERRED TO THE WINGS OF THIS SHIP!

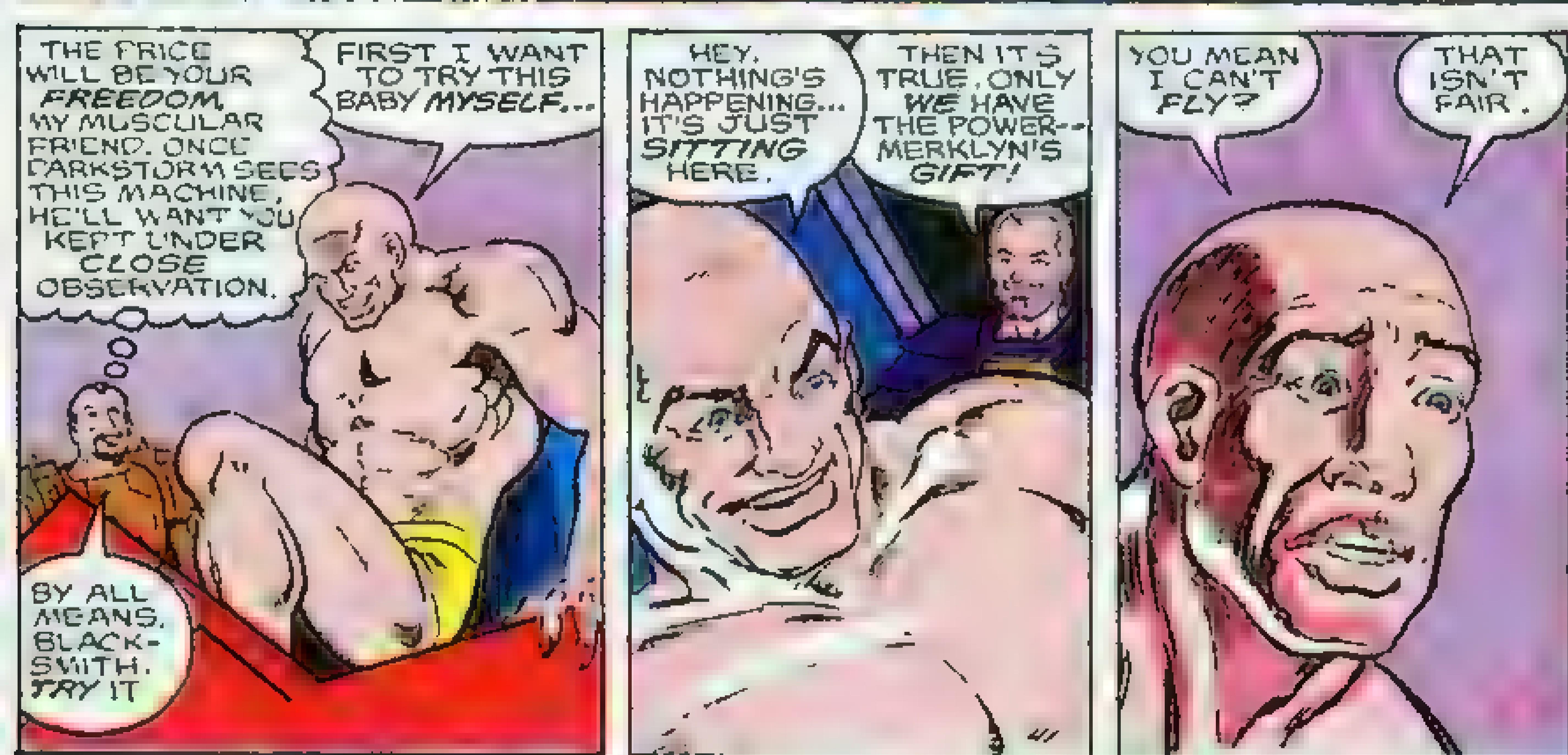
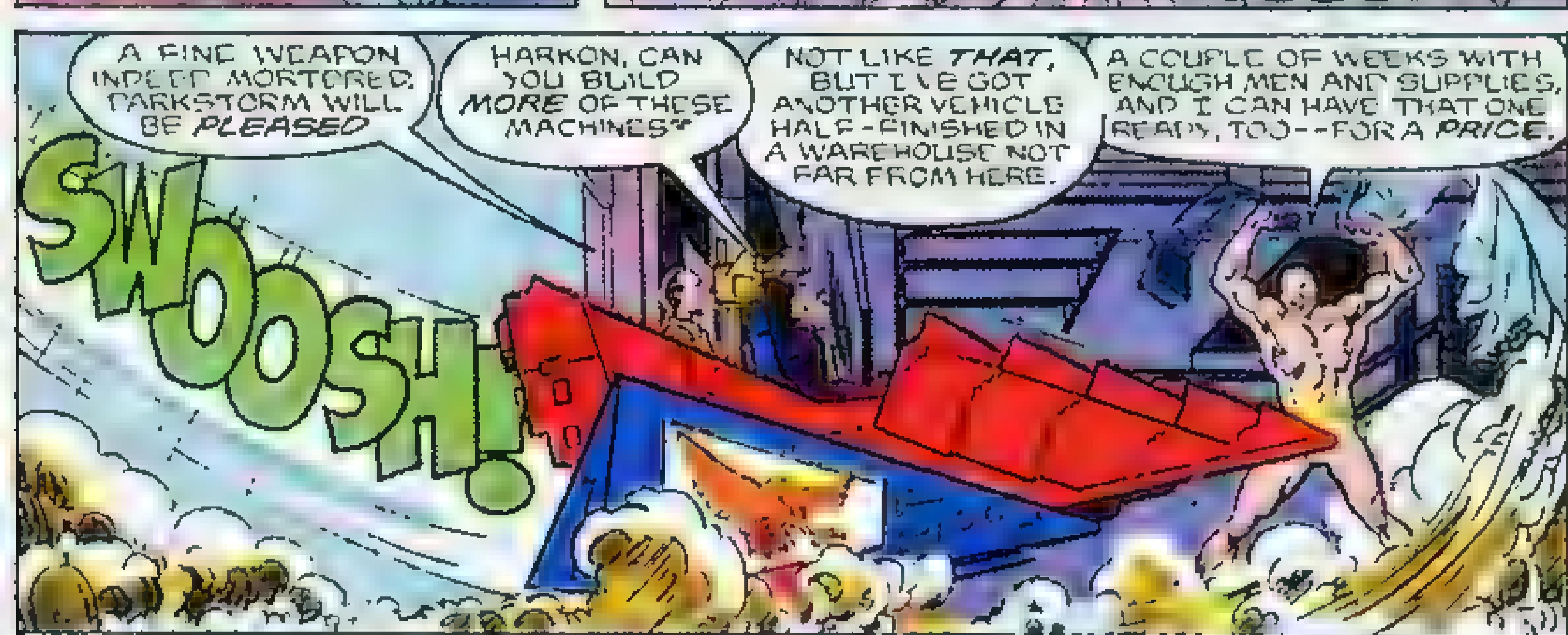
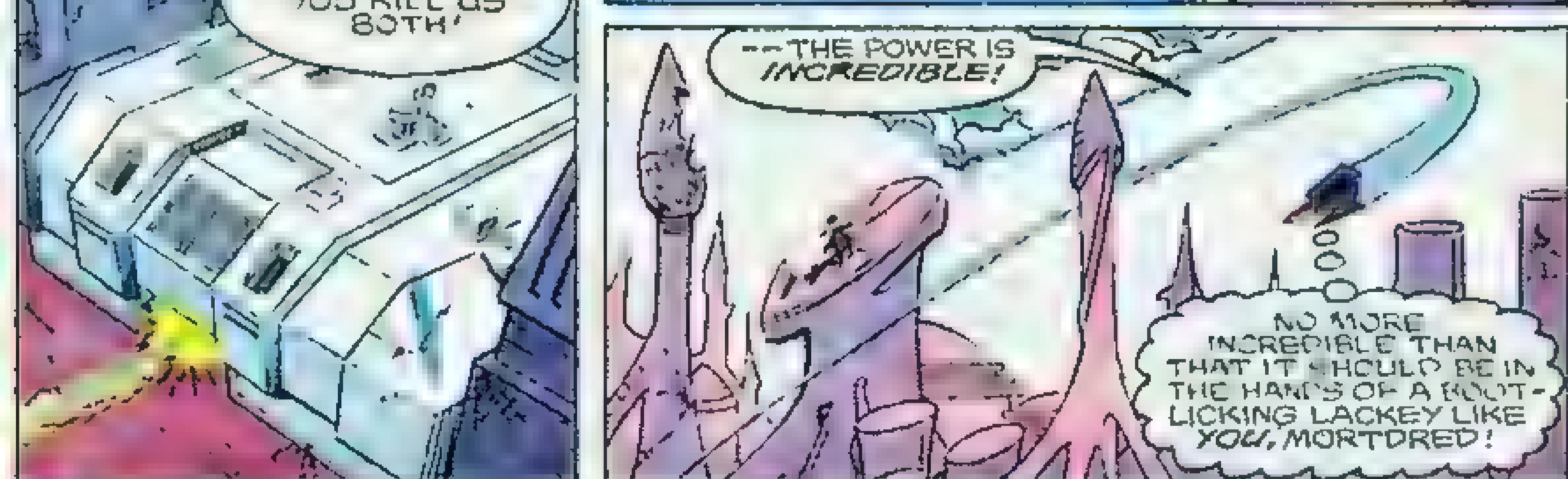
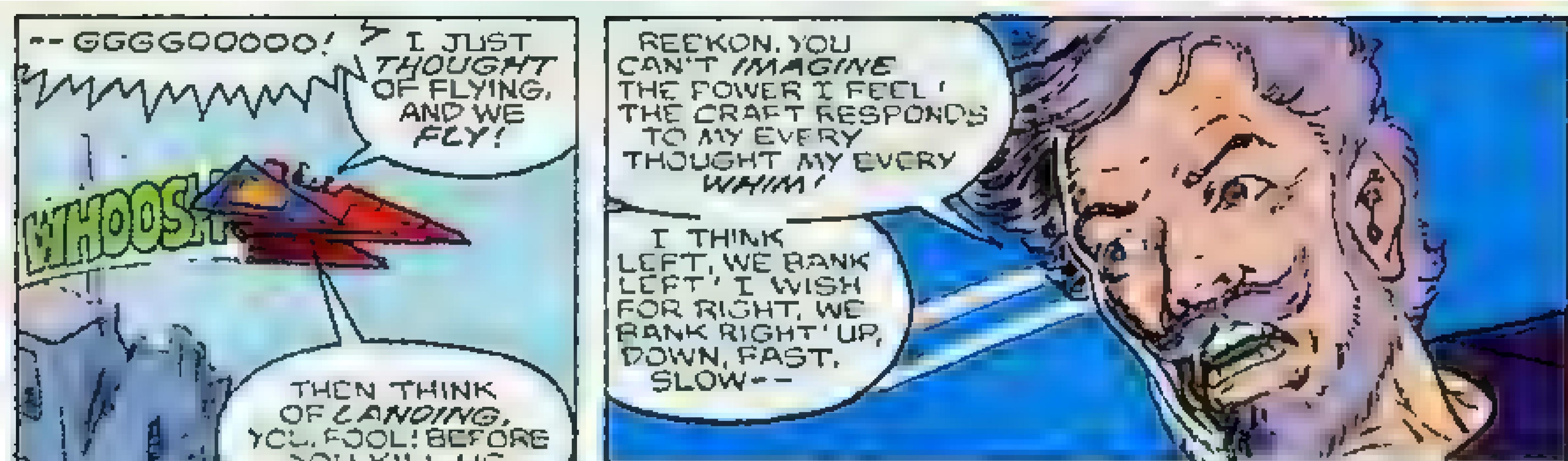
AND LISTEN-- THOUGH NEITHER OF US IS TOUCHING IT, THE CRAFT IS STILL HUMMING WITH LIFE!

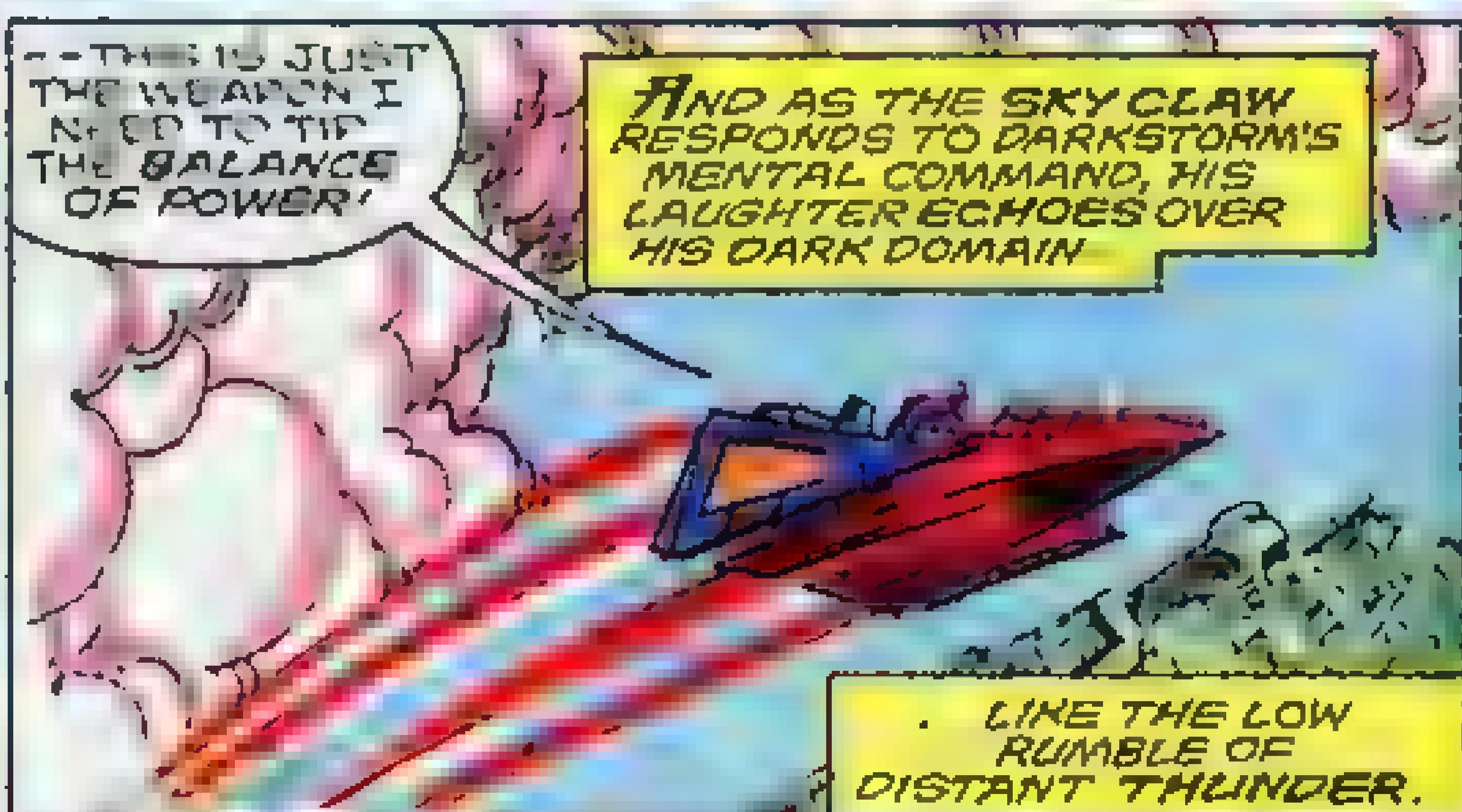
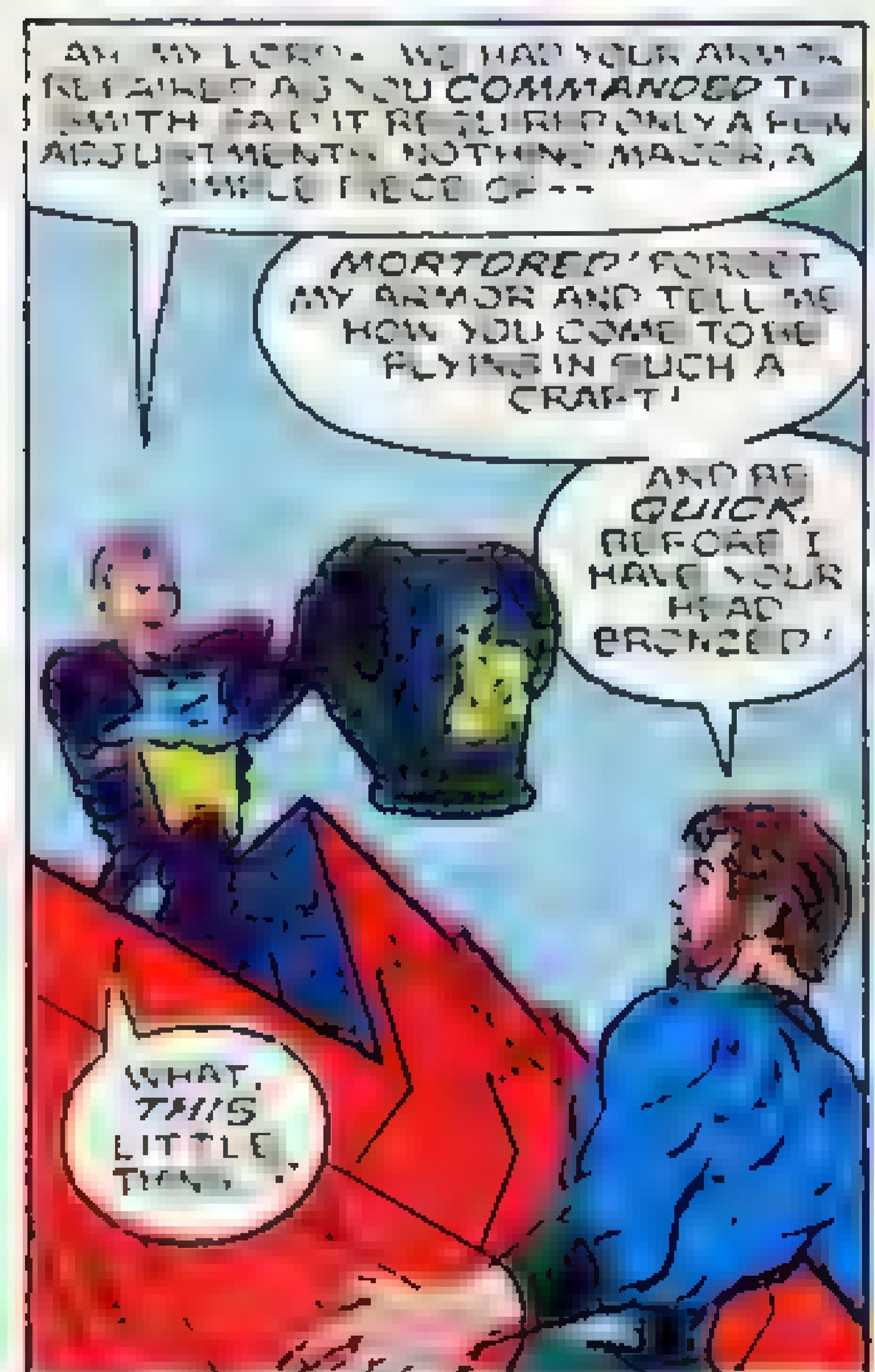
REEKON, COULD THIS BE OUR POWER?  
THE OTHERS HAVE STAFFS... AND WE HAVE THIS VEHICLE!

THERE'S ONLY ONE WAY TO FIND OUT, MORTORED. TAKE THE PILOT'S POSITION. THE CRAFT WEARS YOUR SYMBOL AFTER ALL.

THOUGH WHY A WORM LIKE YOU SHOULD HAVE SUCH FORTUNE, I'LL NEVER KNOW.







THAT NIGHT, AS THE DARKLING LORDS GATHER FOR A CELEBRATORY SUPPER IN THE CASTLE HALL, ALL THOUGHTS TURN TO THE FUTURE... AND EACH HEART THROBS WITH A CRAVING FOR POWER...

THINK OF IT,  
LORD  
DARKSTORM!

ARMADA OF SUCH VEHICLES IN OUR CONTROL -- BUILT BY HARMON AND OTHER SLAVES -- THERE'S NOTHING WE CAN'T ACCOMPLISH!

MUNCH! DON'T FORGET AN ARMADA. USE SKY CLAW NOW. SNEAK INTO LERIC'S CASTLE. SMASH THEM ALL.

WOULD THAT BE WISE? AFTER ALL, WE DON'T KNOW WHAT POWERS THEY HAVE... WHAT DEFENSES PROTECT THEM.

WE SHOULDN'T RUSH INTO ANYTHING...

ALWAYS THE CAREFUL COWARD, EH, LEXOR?

CAREFUL YES, MY LORD. COWARD NO.

NEVER MIND. I'M NOT YET READY THIS TIME I THINK YOU COUNSEL WISELY.

TO STRIKE. I NEED INFORMATION, I NEED DETAILS. THEN WE'LL SMASH OUR ENEMIES TO DUST.

LOOKS TO ME LIKE DARKSTORM'S EVEN MORE RELUCTANT TO ACT NOW THAT HE'S GOT HIS SECRET WEAPON.

HE'S RIGHT TO BE CAUTIOUS...

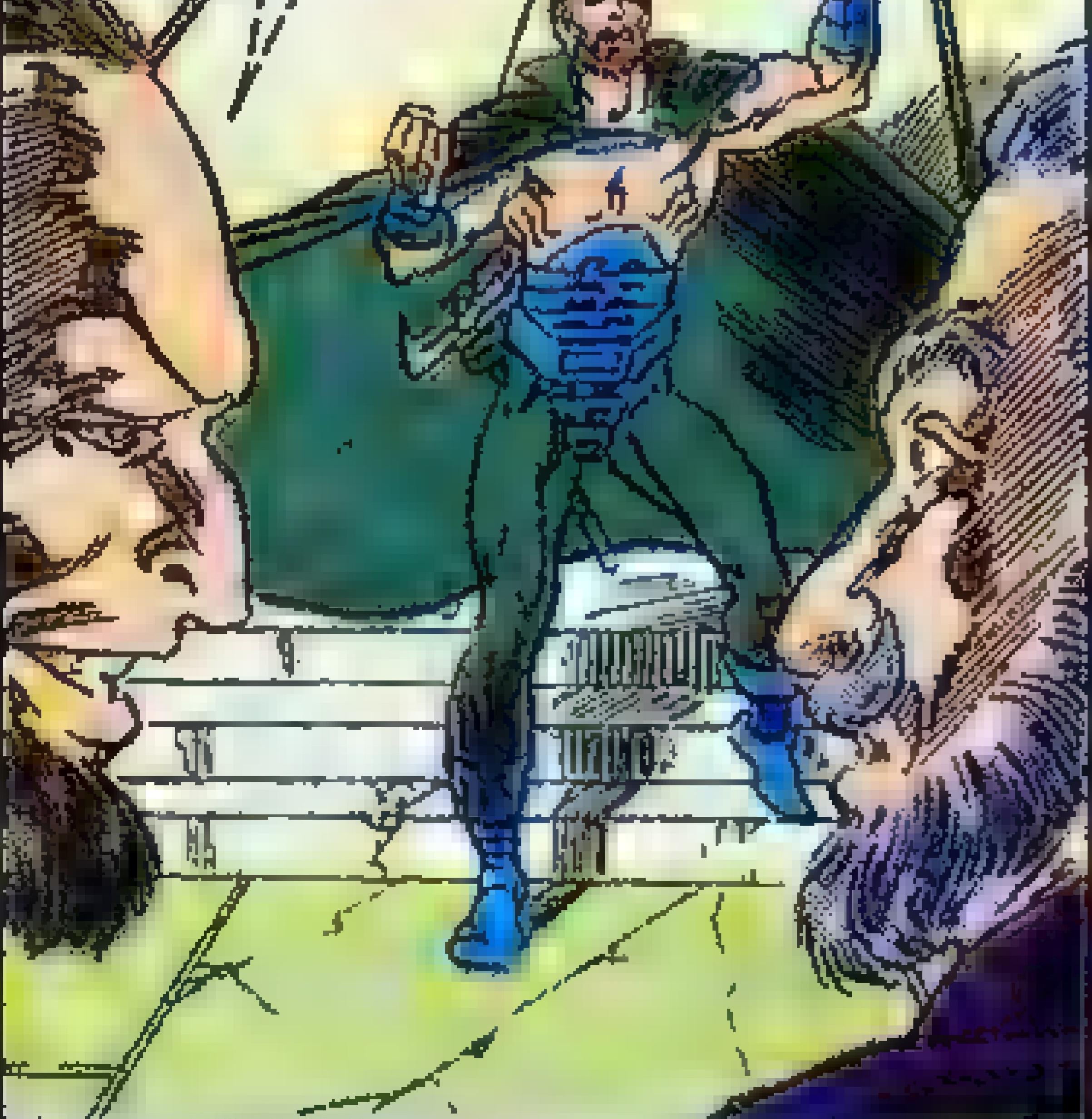
PERHAPS TOO CAUTIOUS...

SMASH THEM, AND GRIND THEM LIKE WHEAT IN A MILL...

LISTEN TO HIM, IT'S ALMOST AS IF HE'D RATHER TALK ABOUT CRUSHING OUR FOES THAN DO IT!

IT MAKES ME WONDER...

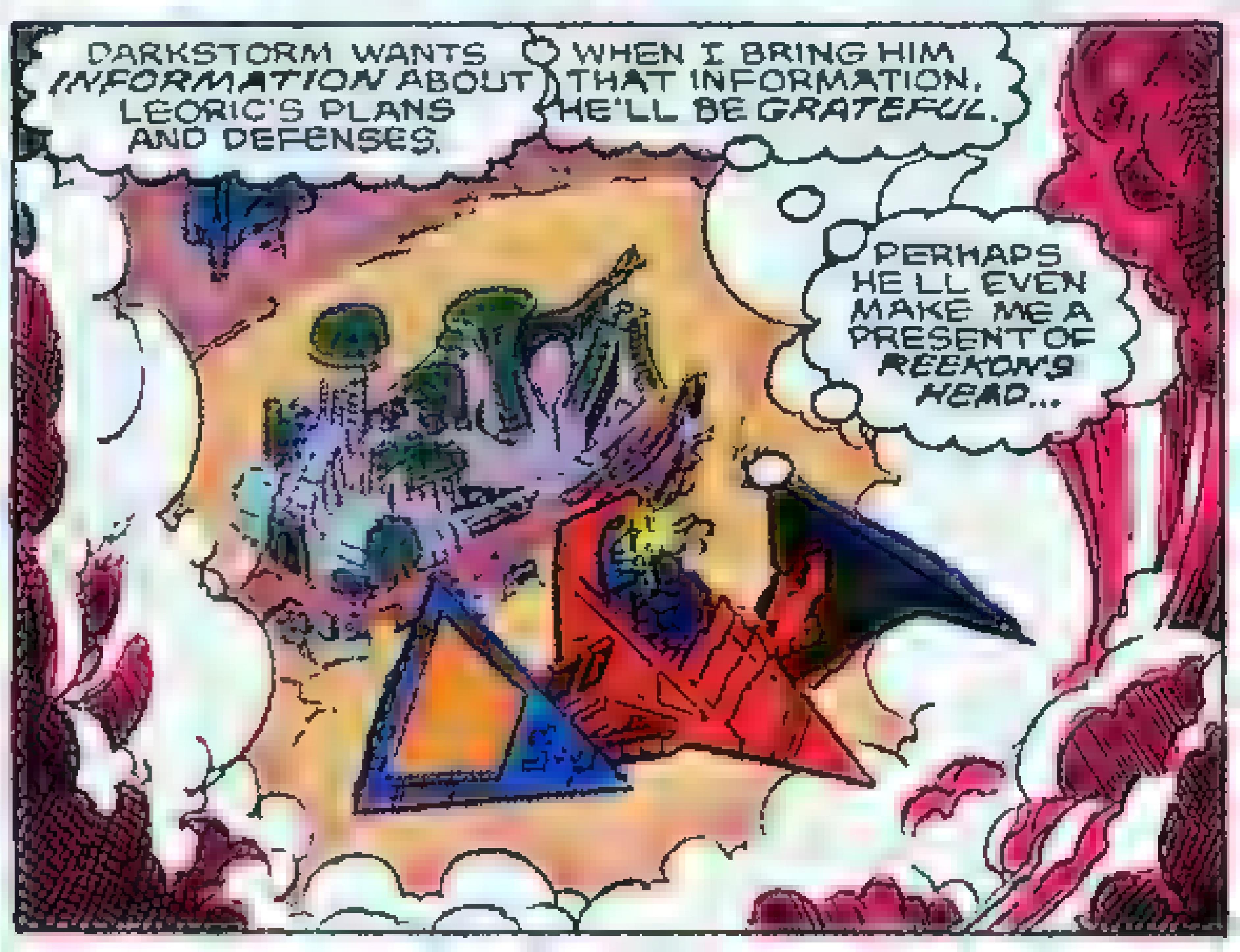
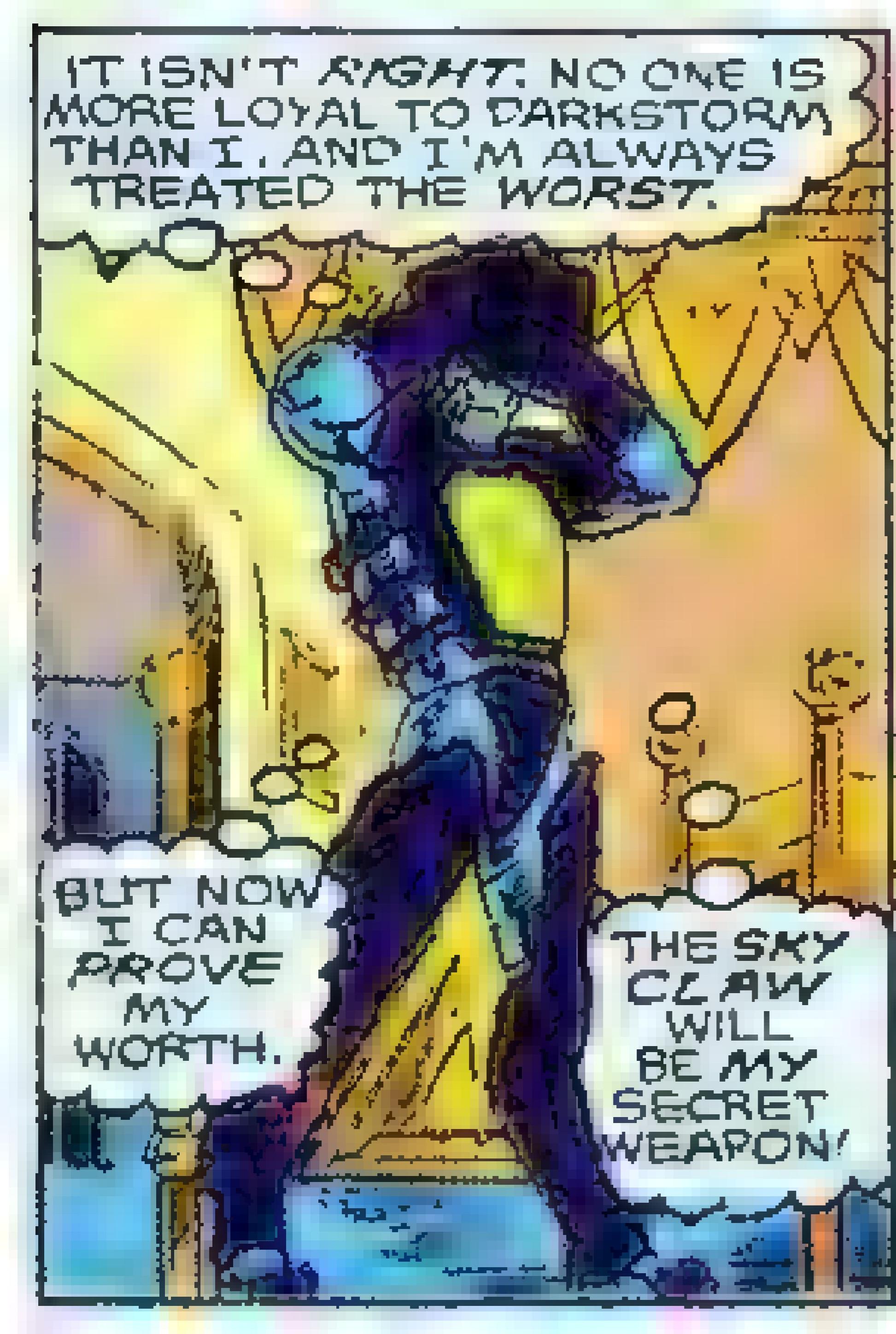
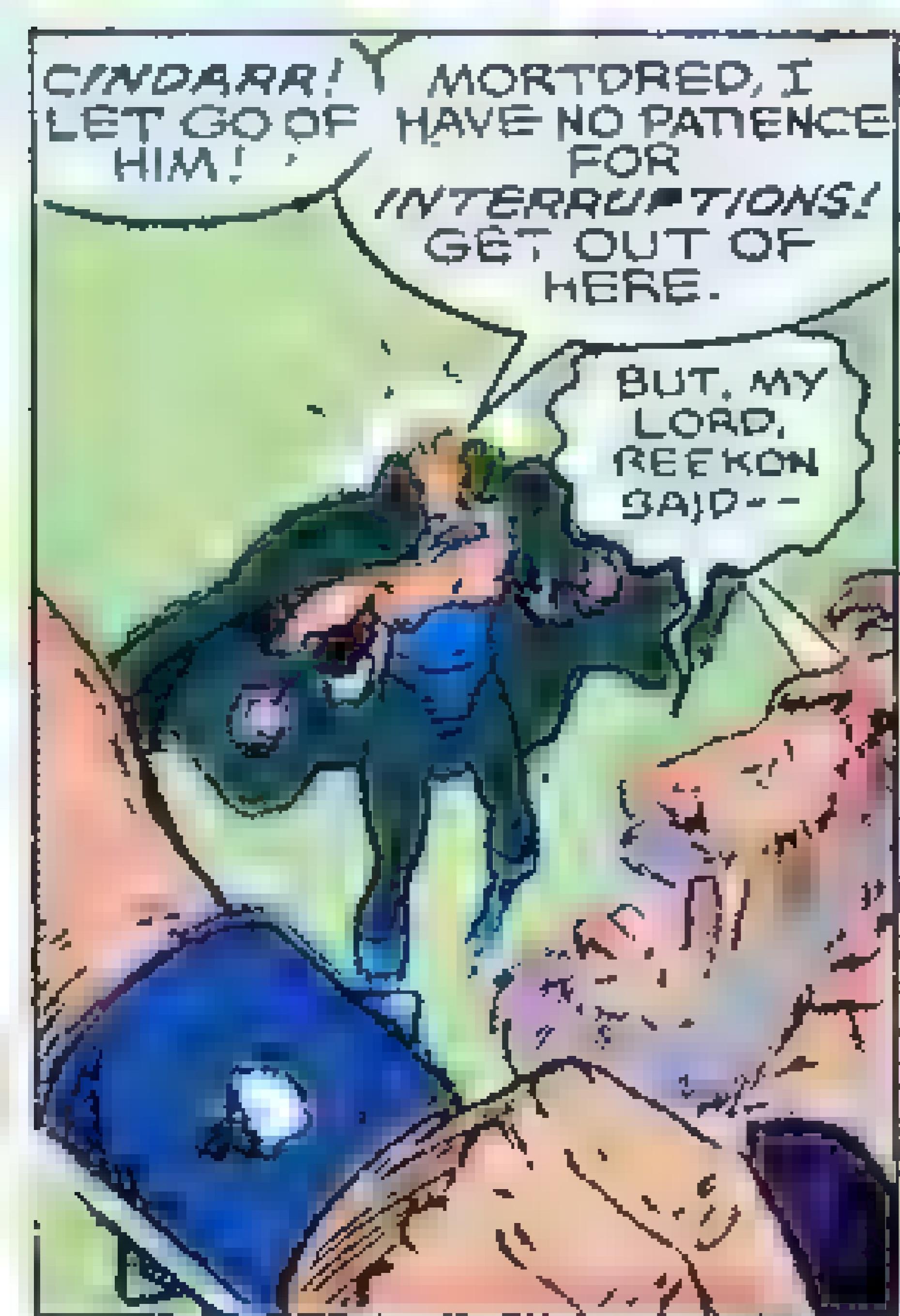
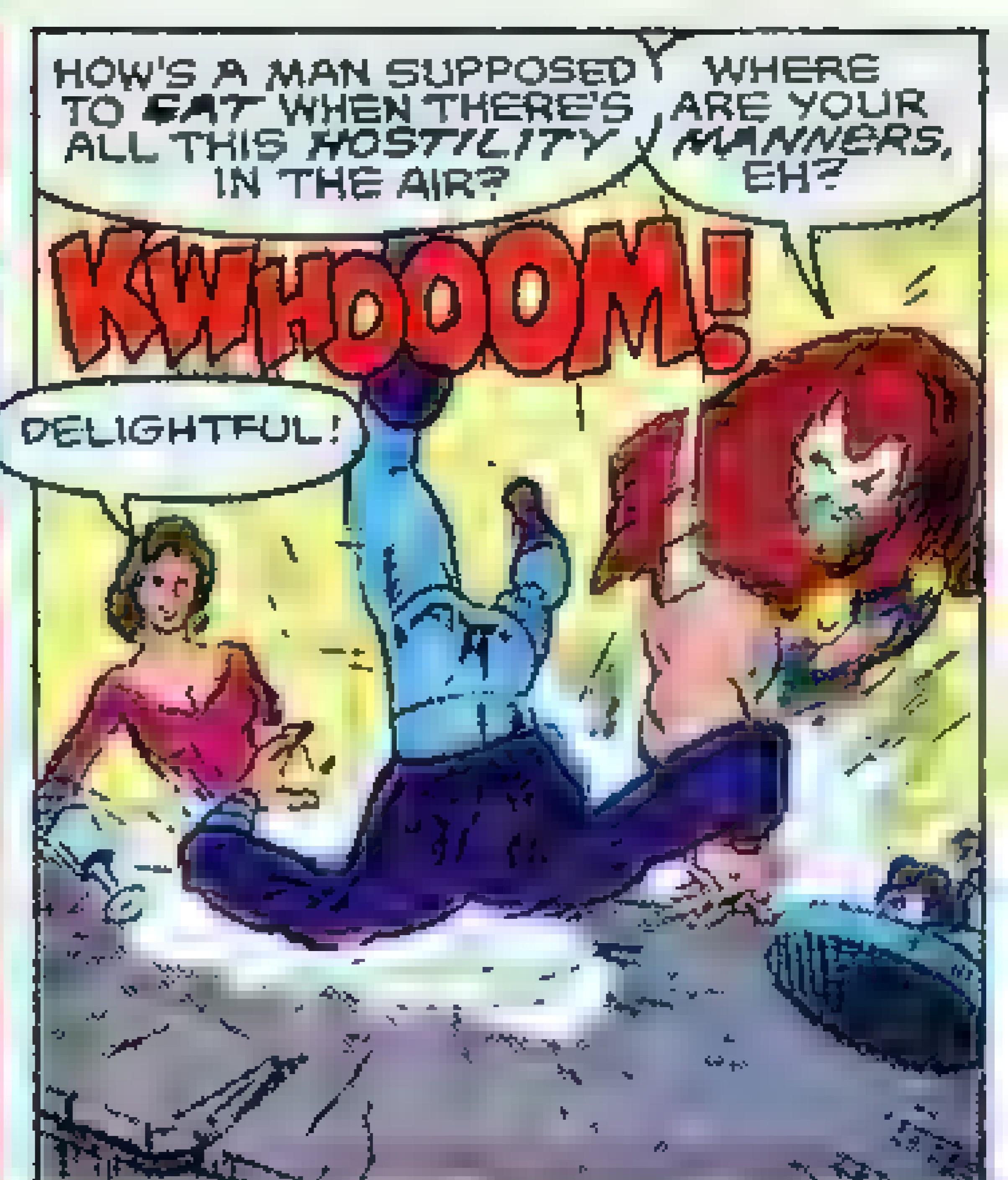
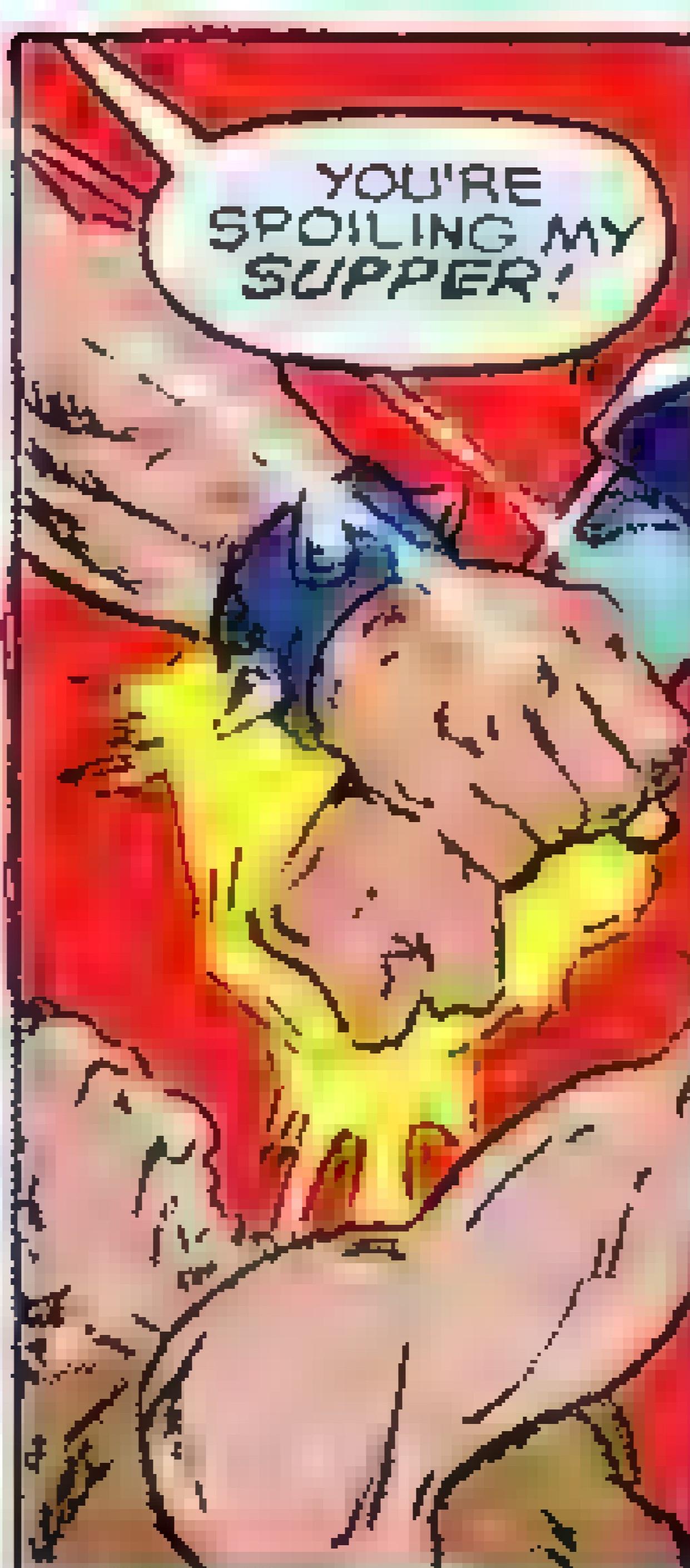
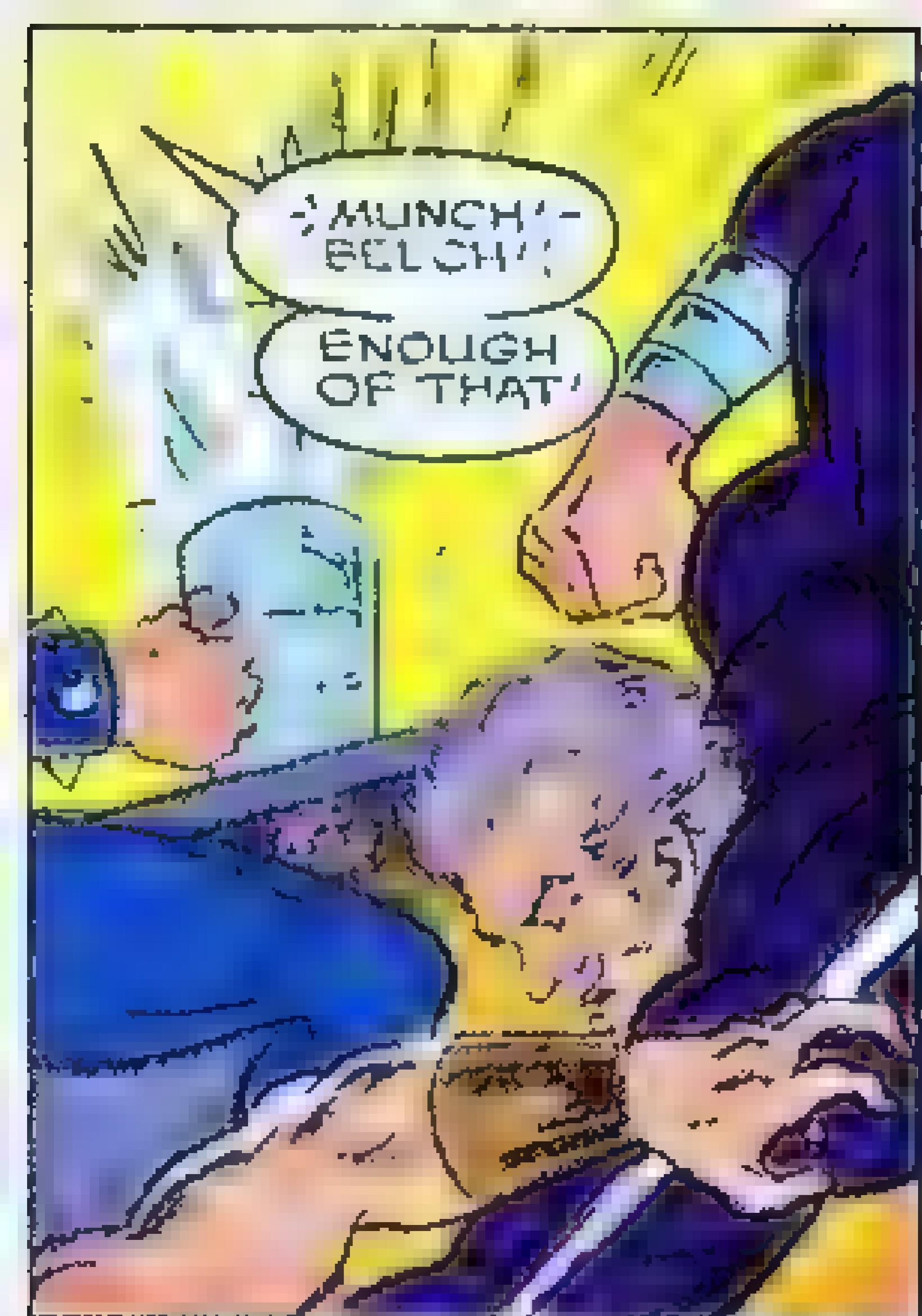
... PERHAPS LEXOR ISN'T THE ONLY COWARD IN OUR MIDST.

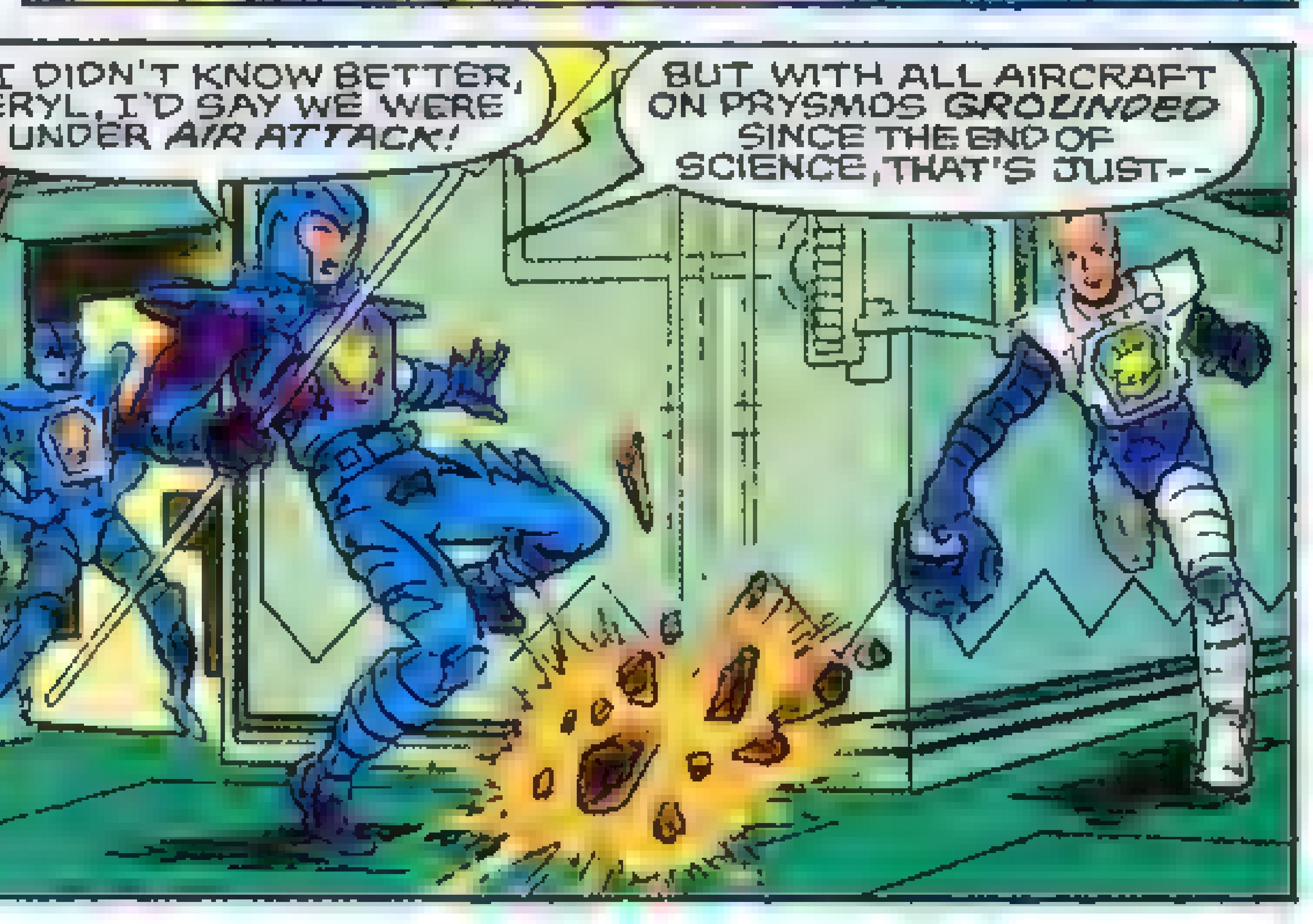
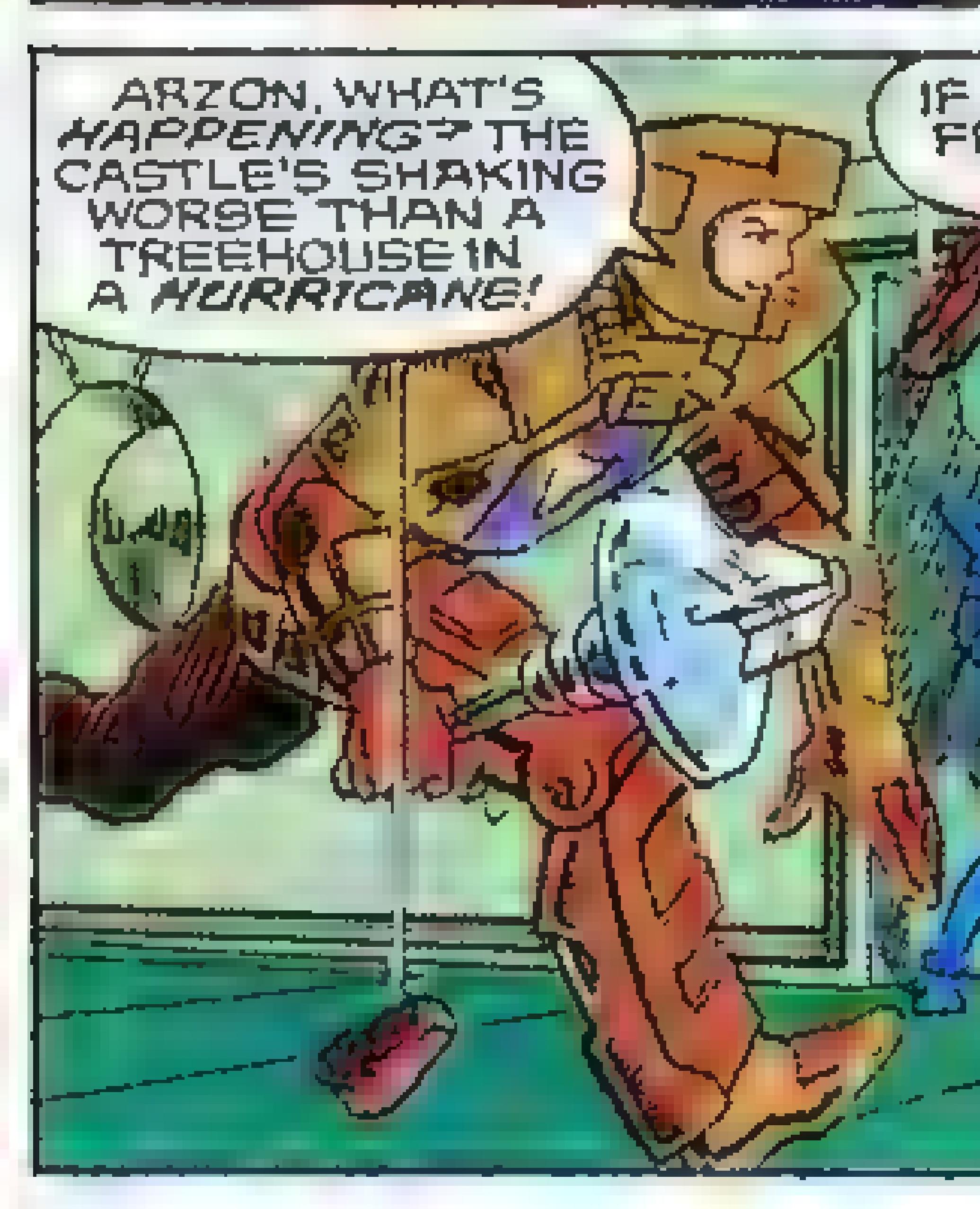
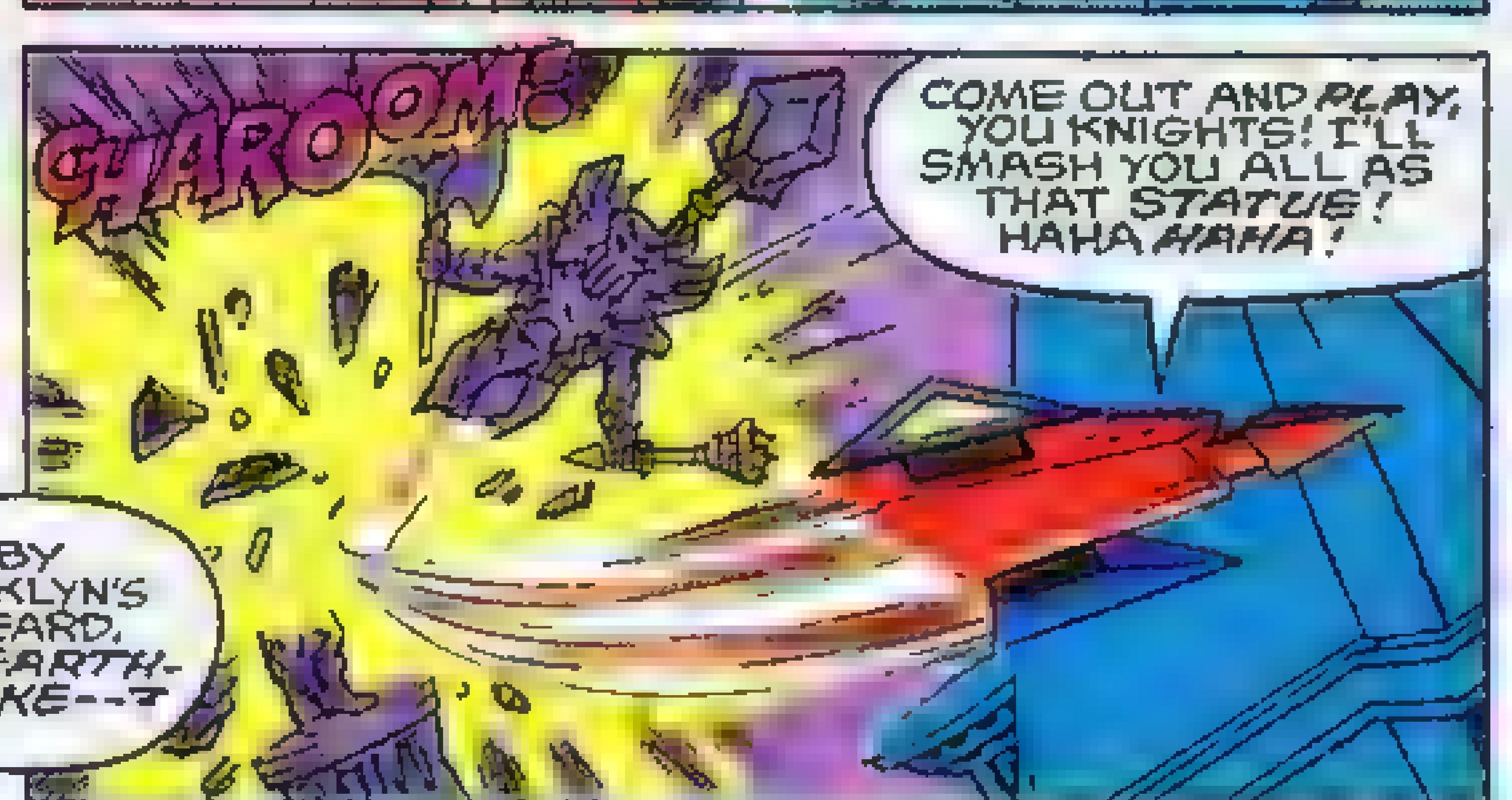
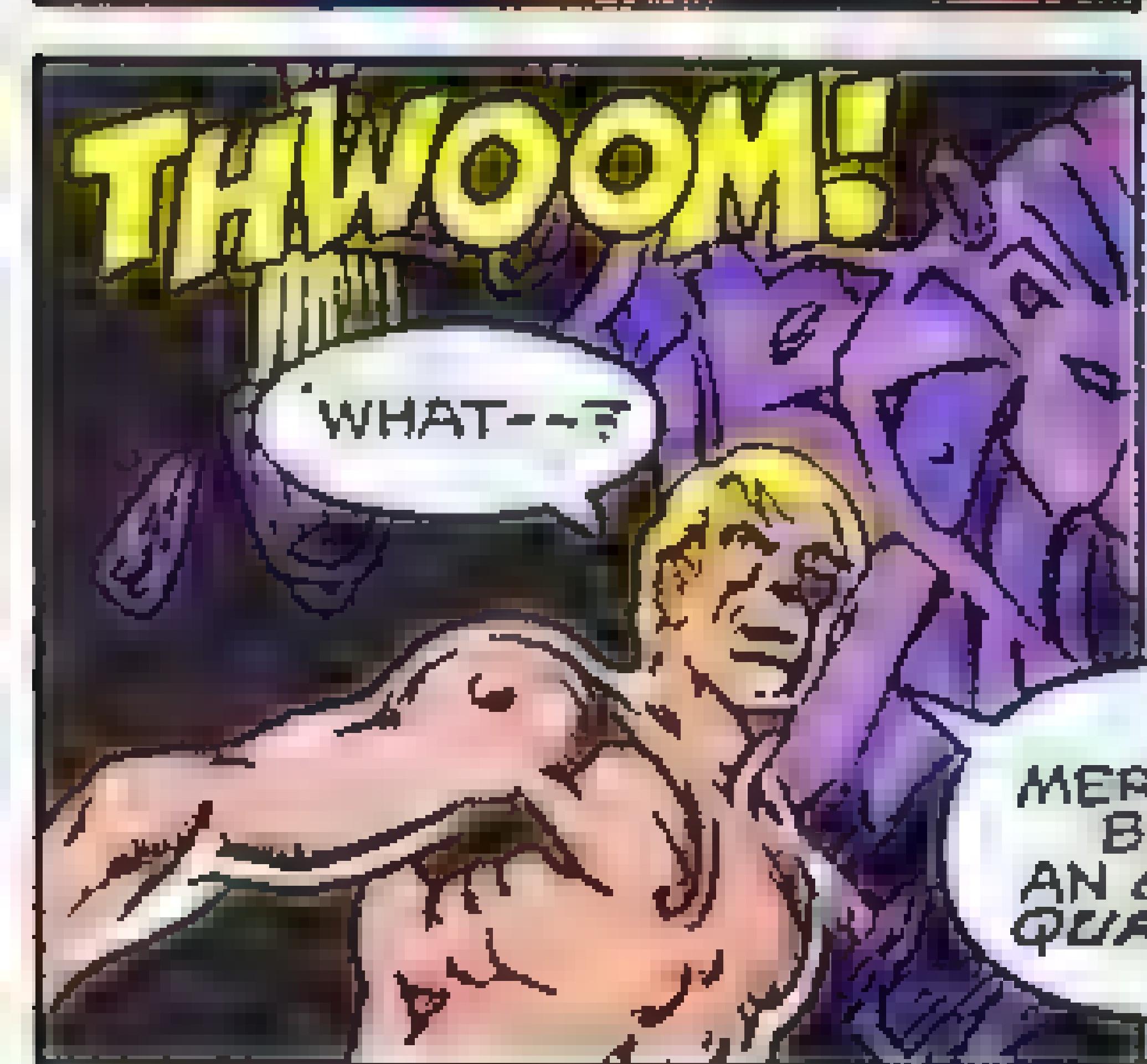
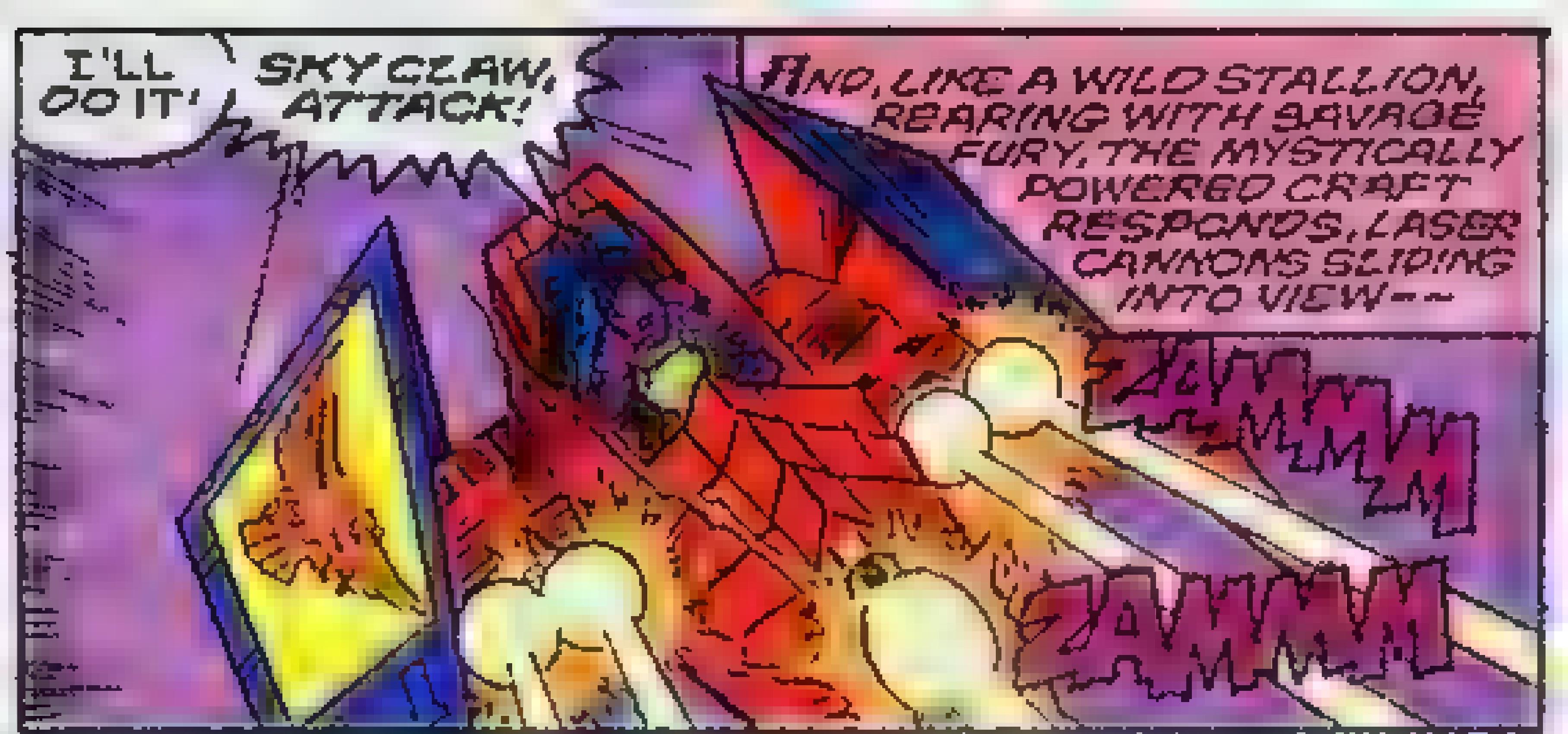


HOW DARE YOU?  
GOOD'A FIGHT!  
ABOUT TIME!

WHAM!







--IMPOSSIBLE?

THAT'S A SKY  
SHIP! BUT HOW  
CAN IT FLY?  
NOTHING  
THAT USES  
ELECTRICITY  
WORKS ANY  
MORE!

OBVIOUSLY,  
IT DOESN'T  
FLY!

THAT CRAFT MUST  
BE POWERED BY  
MAGIC-- AND  
IT'S UNDOUBTEDLY  
PILOTED BY ONE  
OF THE DARKLING  
LORDS!

WHAT A DEADLY  
COMBINATION!

ZAMM

SAMM

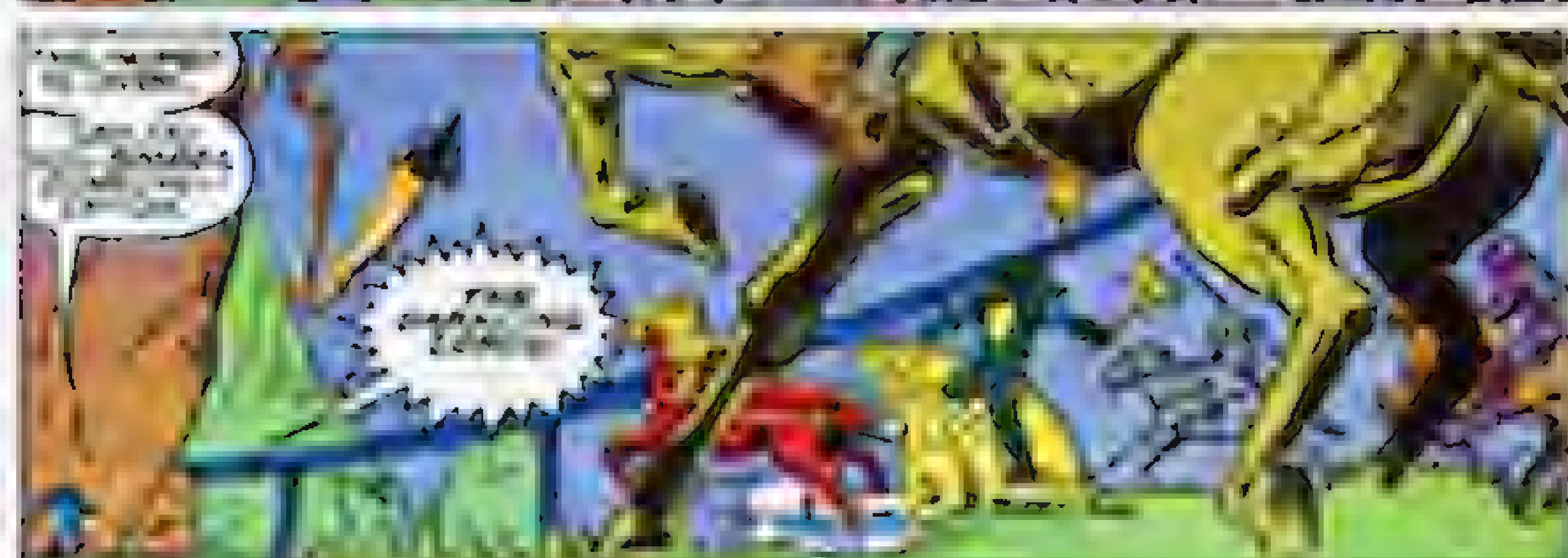


WITH ALL OF  
US ON FOOT, HOW  
CAN WE DEFEND  
OURSELVES AGAINST  
SUCH A FOE?

A VOICE IN MY  
THOUGHTS...  
MERKLYN'S  
VOICE...  
FORMING  
WORDS IN MY  
MIND...

"A WHIM, A  
THOUGHT, AND  
MORE IS  
Sought.."





I HAD A FEELING WE'D FIND MORTORED HERE, DOING SOMETHING STUPID, WHEN REEKON FOUND THE SKY CLAW MISSING.

HE'S MADE A PERFECT BOTCH OF THINGS--BUT THERE'S STILL A CHANCE WE CAN SALVAGE SOMETHING FROM THIS NIGHT'S FIASCO!

WITH PLEASURE, MY NOBLE LIEGE! I'VE BEEN ACHING FOR A REMATCH WITH THESE SO-CALLED KNIGHTS!

HAH!

KRAK!

DARKLING LORDS! PICK YOUR ADVERSARY-- AND DESTROY HIM!

UNNN!

THE DARKLING LORDS CAUGHT US BY SURPRISE-- WITH OUR DEFENSES DOWN, OUR PEOPLE STILL REELING FROM THAT AIR ATTACK!

WORSE, THEY'RE MOUNTED AND WE'RE AFOOT-- GIVING THEM THE TACTICAL ADVANTAGE!

SOMEHOW I HAVE TO EVEN THE ODDS AGAINST US!

PERHAPS BY LAUNCHING AN "AIR ATTACK" OF MY OWN--

...AND WHAT BETTER TARGET THAN THAT CRINGING COWARD, LEXORE?

PERHAPS IT IS THE RUSTLE OF LEAVES THAT ALERTS THE DARKLING LORD--

--BUT WHATEVER THE REASON, ECTAR'S ATTACK ISN'T QUITE AS UNEXPECTED AS HE'D HOPED.

"THE ARROWS TURN, THE SWORDS REBEL--

--MAY NOTHING PIERCE THIS MORTAL SHELL!"

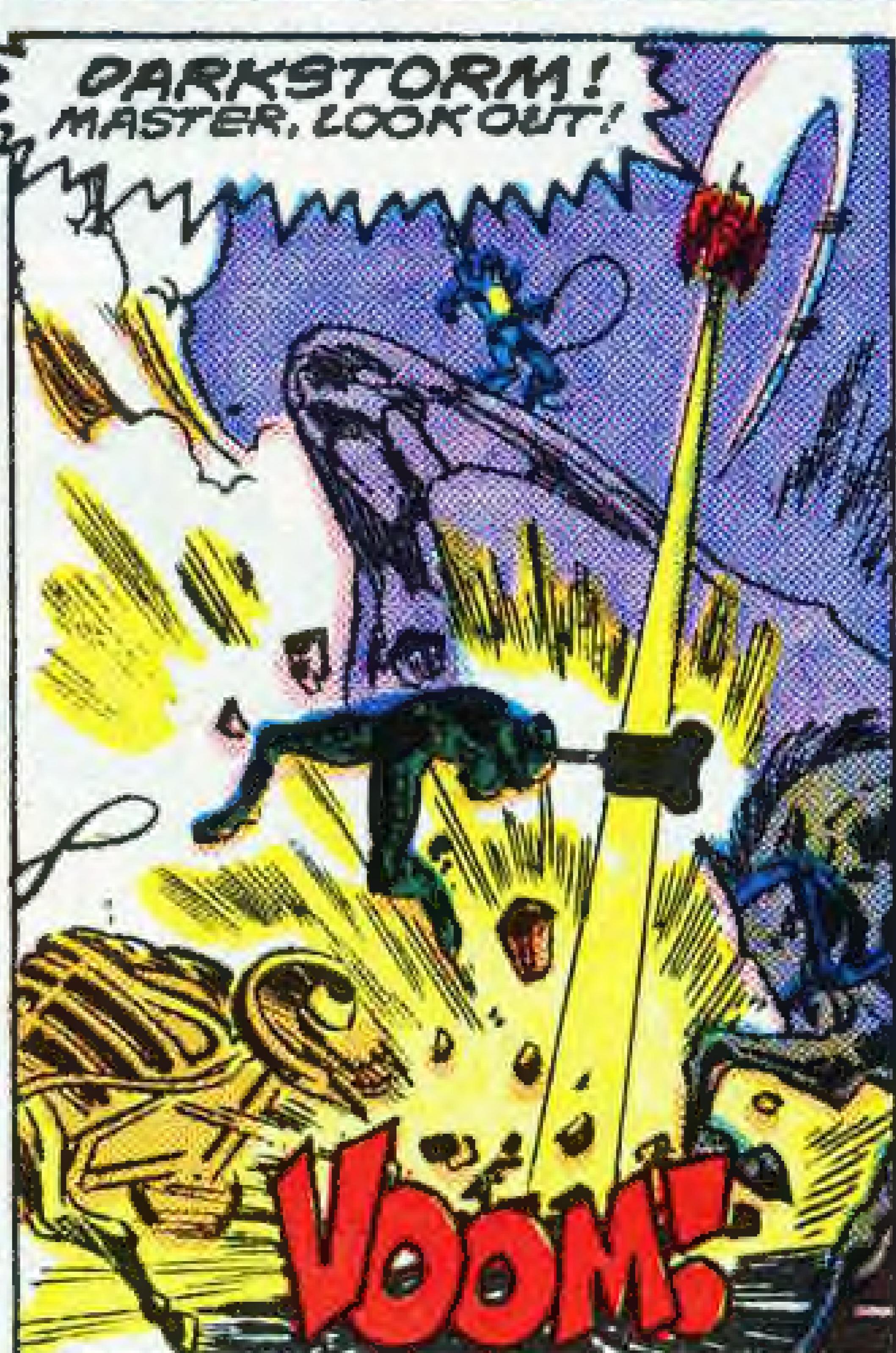
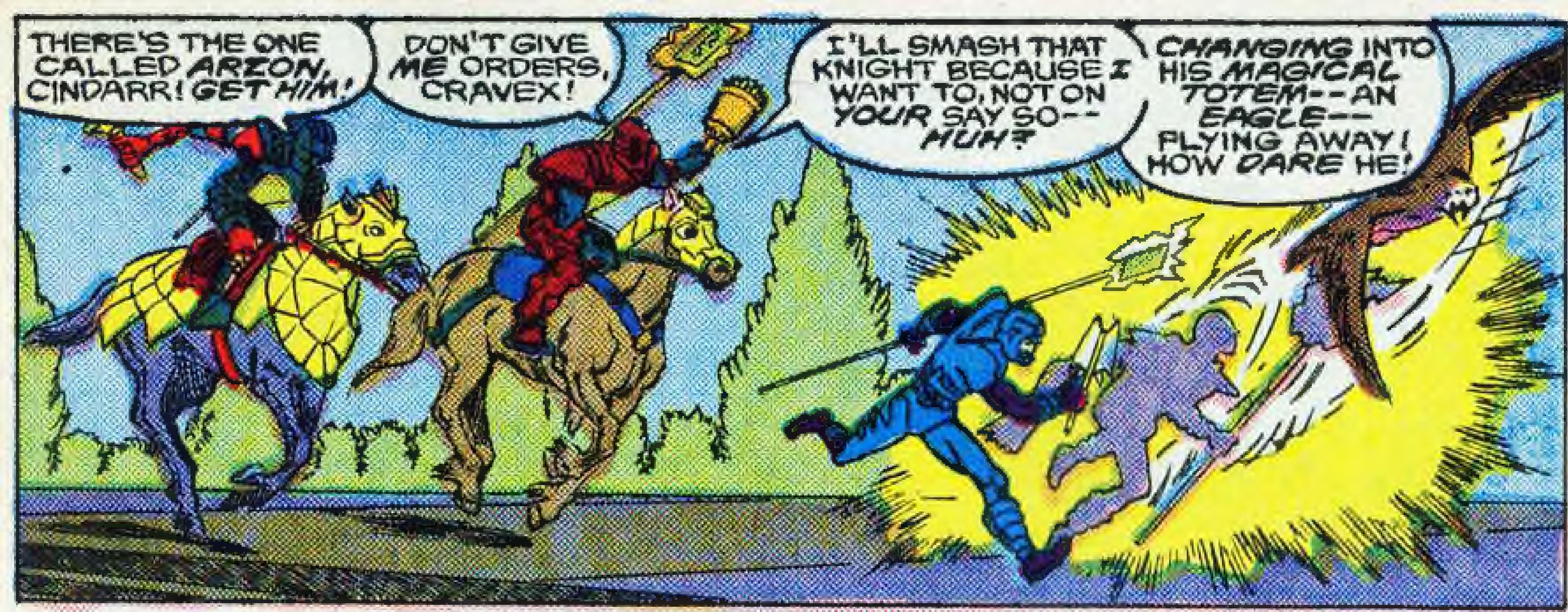
HAHAHAHA!

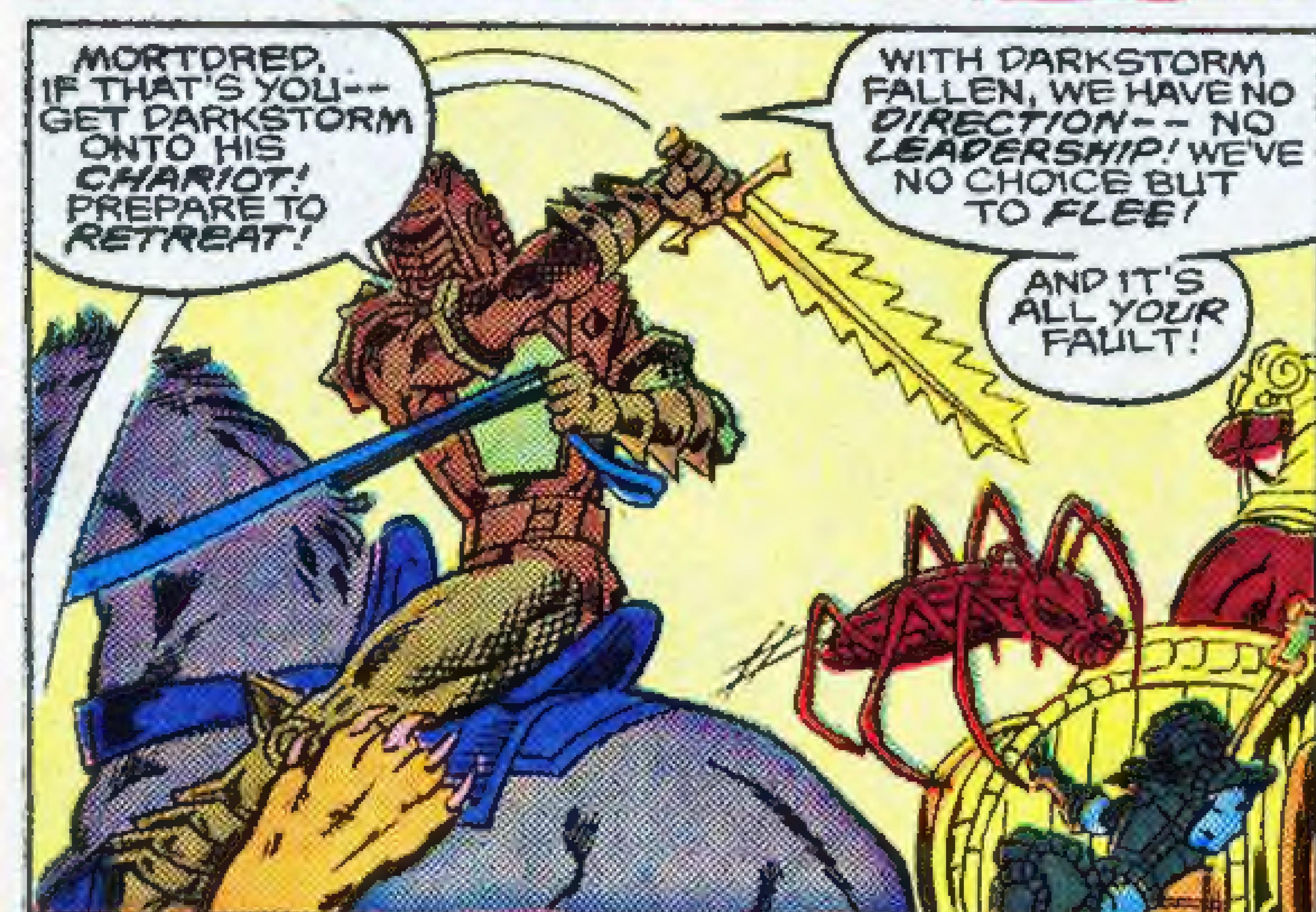
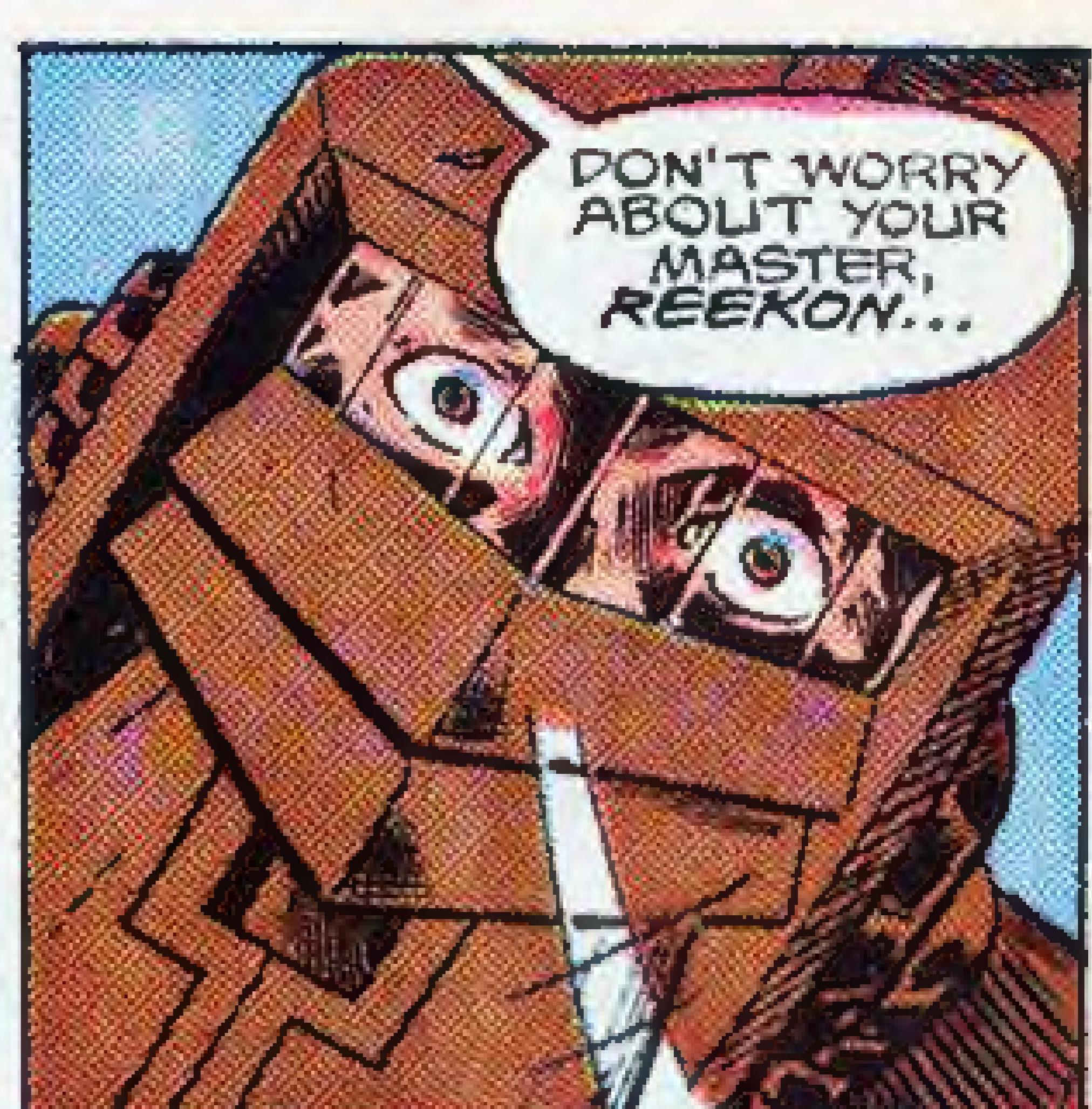
--PERHAPS SOME OLDER, INSTINCTIVE SENSE OF SELF-PRESERVATION--

OWW!

FOOL! YOU CAN'T HURT ME!





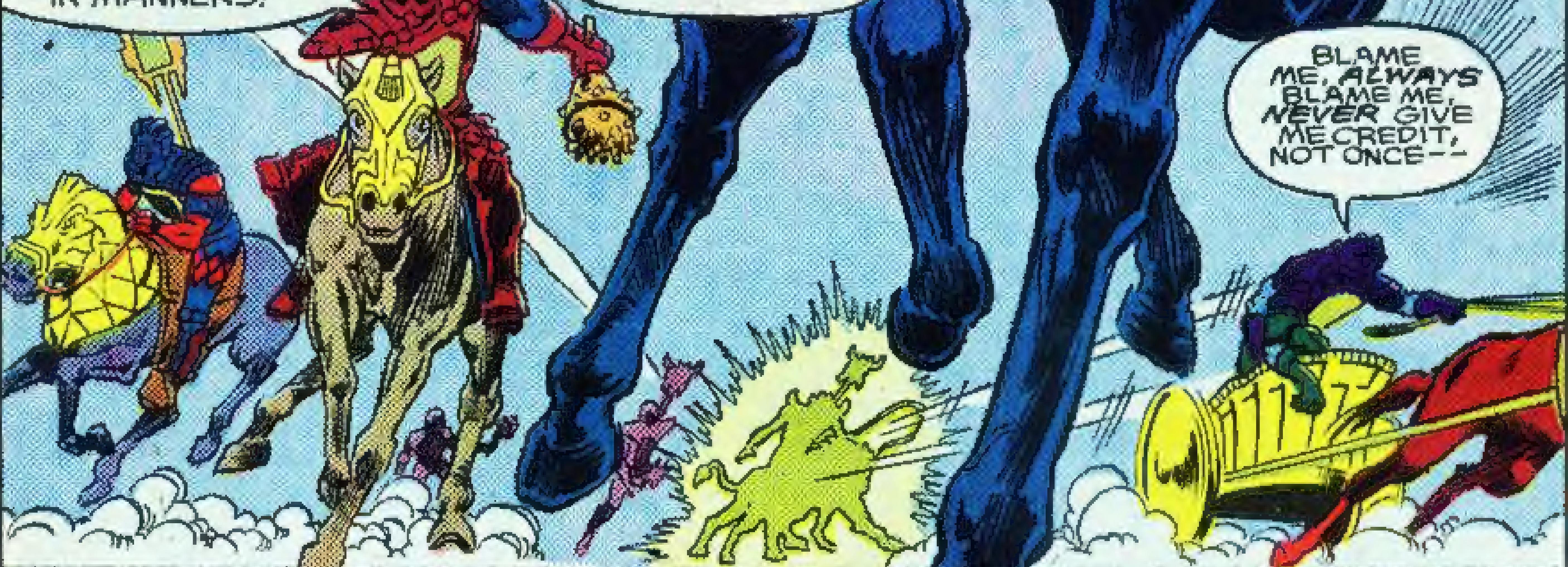


SHUT UP, MORTDRED--  
BEFORE I TEACH YOU  
ANOTHER LESSON  
IN MANNERS!

YOU HEARD,  
REEKON! ALL OF  
YOU! RETREAT!

RETREAT!

BLAME  
ME. ALWAYS  
BLAME ME,  
NEVER GIVE  
ME CREDIT,  
NOT ONCE--

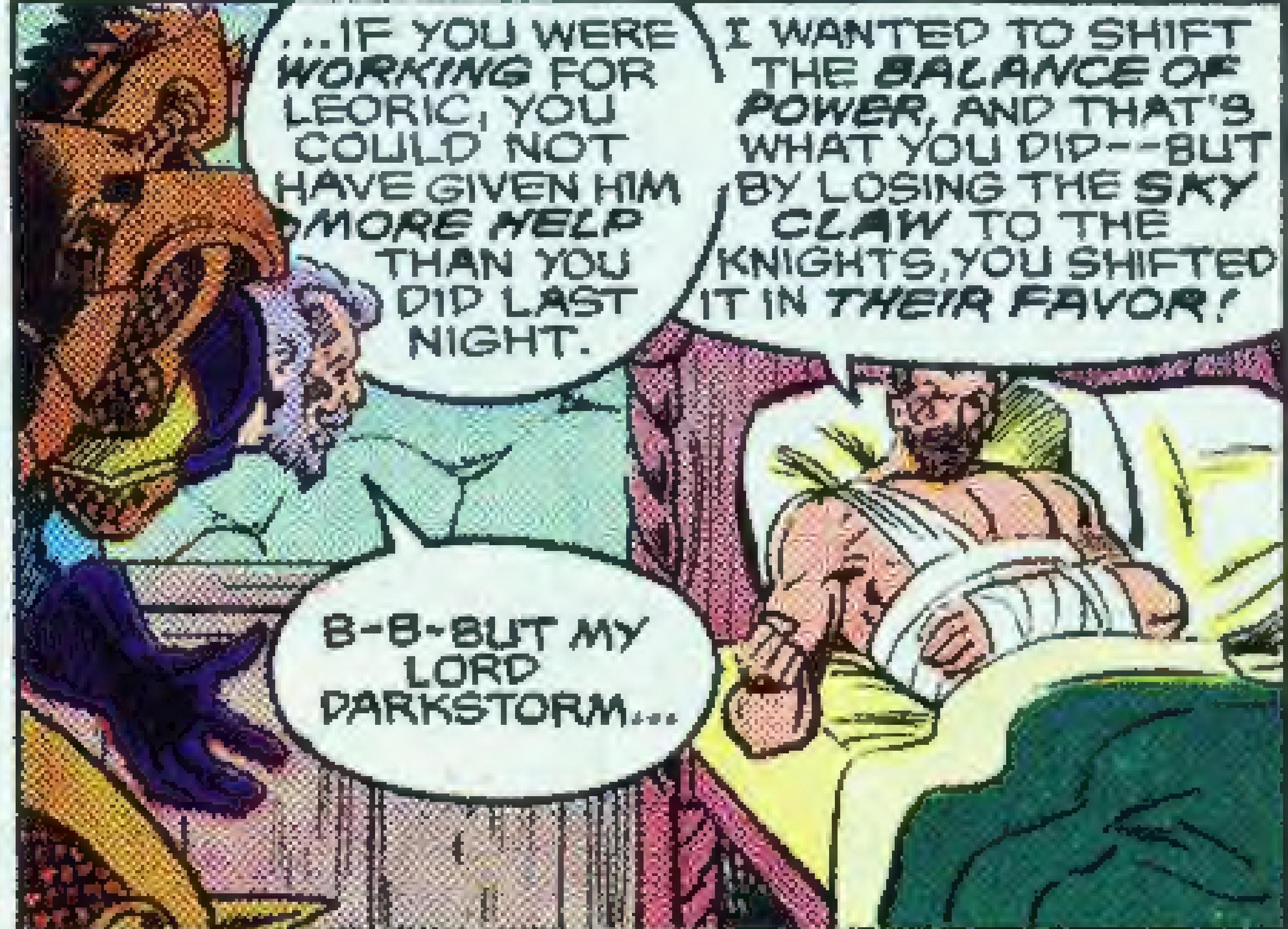


NEXT MORNING,  
IN DARKSTORM'S  
DARK DOMAIN...

I MUST GIVE  
YOU CREDIT,  
MORTDRED...

...IF YOU WERE  
WORKING FOR  
LEORIC, YOU  
COULD NOT  
HAVE GIVEN HIM  
MORE HELP  
THAN YOU  
DID LAST  
NIGHT.

I WANTED TO SHIFT  
THE BALANCE OF  
POWER, AND THAT'S  
WHAT YOU DID--BUT  
BY LOSING THE SKY  
CLAW TO THE  
KNIGHTS, YOU SHIFTED  
IT IN THEIR FAVOR!



AND LET'S NOT  
EVEN MENTION THE  
INJURIES YOUR  
BUMBLING CAUSED  
ME PERSONALLY.

LOCK HIM AWAY  
TILL I DECIDE  
WHAT TO DO WITH  
HIM! I DON'T WANT  
TO SEE HIS  
FACE OR HEAR  
HIS VOICE FOR  
THE NEXT WEEK  
AT LEAST!



THE END